

Ideas and thoughts of President Giani Zail Singh as reflected in his speeches and utterances will continue to be relevant till the last man in the country is uplifted above poverty line. Conviction and courage with which he has spoken on some of the issues aiming at betterment of quality of life of the poor, has raised his stock high among the masses. No wonder he aptly deserves to be called a truly representative figure of the Indian people. The masses see in him a President, who voices their inmost thoughts and aspirations. He has been face to face with the bulk of illiterates and ignorants belonging to remote and interior India, who are yet to grasp the spirit of change, brought about by political emancipation from foreign rule more than four decades ago. His speeches reflect India's endless diversity with underlying unity.

The volume at hand comprises select speeches of latter half of his tenure as President of India. The speeches will be appreciated for the merit of intrinsic values which Giani Zail Singh has always cherished for this country.

**SPEECHES  
OF  
PRESIDENT  
GIANI ZAIL SINGH**

**VOLUME II  
(1985-1987)**

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## About This Volume

An individual is best understood from what he speaks. Speeches of President Giani Zail Singh reveal the man he is. His speeches dwell on all round economic development, accelerated industrial and agricultural advancement and the Nation's march on the path of self-reliance. Yet he has always pleaded for the kind of development, that eliminates poverty and backwardness. Only this will pave the way for removal of economic and social disparities and evolution of an egalitarian social order. That is why when he speaks, the masses feel that he is one of them.

The President of India represents the Nation. Nation looks on to him for guidance. The Presidents of India have guided the country as ultimate preservers and upholders of the constitution and enshrined democratic institutions and values. Our Presidents have laid down conventions and healthy traditions that will guide and enlighten the posterity. India is fortunate that very noble and able men have donned the mantle of incumbant of Rashtrapati Bhavan. Even a perfectly engineered computer could not have offered a better choice. Giani Zail Singh is seventh in the fine tradition of Indian Presidents.

Yet his uniqueness lies in that he belongs to grassroot strata of the society. His keen desire to know India drove him to people of all parts of the country. He has visited Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep and numerous other far flung and interior areas. For him a tiny village is as important as a metropolis and therefore due attention should be paid to its development. He invariably voices the concern for the poor, the deprived, the foresaken, the downtrodden and the marginalised. That explains why he is so close to the hearts of the people.

The book in hand comprises his selected speeches for the period 1985-87 covering a wide range of subjects. Like its predecessor, this volume also has been divided into ten chapters for the convenience of our readers. Since it is ongoing work, the style and broad format of the volume is same.

Our first volume had been well received by different segments of our readership. It is our expectation that this volume also will be welcomed by teachers, students, researchers, and scholars of diverse shades.

—Editor



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# **National Affairs**

## United We Stand

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here today and to present standards to 10 and 11 Squadrons of the Indian Air Force. The two squadrons have distinguished themselves in the field of action many a time during the past and I hope that they will continue to render service to the country with even greater zeal.

Jodhpur stands for a glorious martial tradition, rich in treasures of art and culture. Receipt of the coveted standards by both the squadrons in a place like this is of great significance. The spirit of chivalry associated with the history of Rajasthan and Jodhpur in particular, should inspire you all.

I am told that the Ten Squadron has participated in all the battles fought by India since its inception in 1944 and has come out in flying colours. All ranks of officers and men of the Squadron deserve to be congratulated on their outstanding achievements. It is a matter of great pride that the Squadron has become a versatile one with rich experience in handling different types of aircraft. I feel highly gratified to know that this Squadron has produced a large number of finest officers and airmen, many of whom have grown to occupy high positions in the Air Force.

Equally distinguished in service is the 11 Squadron, the second oldest transport Squadron of our Air Force, to receive the coveted standard today. The Squadron has won this distinction by its hard work and signal services to the nation.

It is given to understand that the Squadron is ever ready to render assistance to the people in times of natural calamities like floods, cyclones etc. The Squadron has acquitted itself creditably in operations in support of the three wings of our defence forces. It has also distinguished itself as a source of help and assistance to the people in times of need. I congratulate the Squadron for its immediate response to fly medicines and doctors to Bhopal recently in order to render speedy assistance to the victims of gas leakage tragedy.

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Speech on presentation of standards to 10 and 11 Squadrons of Indian Air Force, Jodhpur, March 18, 1985

Our Air Force is the youngest of our three defence services, having celebrated its golden jubilee recently. People throughout our vast sub-continent had an occasion then to witness the skill and expertise of our Air Force Personnel. I am deeply impressed by the speed and efficiency displayed by Air Force on many occasions.

We are a peaceful country, wedded to the pursuit of strengthening peace in the world which is essential for promoting human welfare. In the past centuries, India's traditional and eternal values like truth, peace, love and compassion were taken as signs of weakness by foreign aggressors. In the context of the tensions in the present day world, we have necessarily to keep ourselves ready to defend our freedom and integrity with all our resources. We must maintain our defence forces equipped with latest weapons that modern technology can offer. The Government are doing its best in this regard as well as to promote the welfare of persons working in the defence forces. I am sure that our brave officers and airmen present here today will strive their utmost to keep the flag flying and to render devoted service to the nation.

By winning these coveted standards, the two Squadrons namely 10 and 11, are shouldering the extra responsibility of living up to the ideals with renewed inspiration. I am confident that you will come out successful in your strivings and scale new heights of achievement and glory.

The strength of a nation depends upon its unity. Men behind the machines are always more important and I reiterate my belief that you will enhance unity and strength so as to be more effective in operations.

I convey my greetings to all of you officers, airmen, civilian employees, and your families and wish you all success and good luck in future.



## Sentinels of the Frontiers

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today and to present the Colour to Assam Rifles, on the occasion of its 150th Anniversary.

The Assam Rifles began its chequered career 150 years ago as "The Cachar Levy". Since then and till 1945, the Force participated in various operations in the tribal areas and in the process opened up interior areas. It participated in both the world wars, winning practically all the gallantry decorations instituted by the British. After 1947, the Force has done even better and I am told that it has won as many as 200 military and civil gallantry and distinguished service awards conferred by the Government and 305 Governor's awards.

I had the opportunity to see this Force very closely while I was the Union Home Minister and I am aware of their various problems. Despite the varied problems they face and the inhospitable area they live and work in, I have always found them and their families bearing the hardships with courage, fortitude and a smile. The Government are fully alive to their problems and I have no doubt all efforts are being made to improve the service conditions and career prospects of the personnel of the Force.

I also had the privilege of releasing the book on Assam Rifles "Sentinel of the North-East" last year. In a short while, a Special Stamp and First Day Cover will also be released to commemorate your 150th Anniversary. Another link that connects me with Assam Rifles is your Director General Lt. General P.E. Menon who was my Military Secretary earlier.

Historians have aptly named the Force "the right hand of the Civil and the left hand of the Military" and its track record both in peace and in war has been exemplary. Its operations not only cover the North-Eastern Region, but extend also to other places such as Bihar, Orissa and Kerala.

A unique feature of the Force is that whilst guarding the border it has helped the locals in diverse fields, such as medical aid to tribals,

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Speech on the occasion of Colour Presentation parade of the Assam Rifles,  
March 29, 1985.

education of their children, modernisation of agriculture, construction of tracks and bridges, clearing the jungles for communication facilities and even helping in election and census operations in some of the most inhospitable and difficult areas of our country. It has also rendered yeomen service to the locals during calamities like earthquakes, floods, droughts and famine. The Assam Rifles has thus identified itself with the tribals and won their trust, confidence and love. A large number of towns and cities in the North-East have grown up around the Assam Rifles posts. It is, therefore, no wonder that the late Dr. Verrier Elwin, a great lover of the tribals and a former Adviser to Governor of Assam on tribal affairs, paid a handsome tribute to the Assam Rifles in these immortal words:—

“The custodians of law and order, pioneers of every advance into the interior, the guardians of our borders and, above all, the friends of the hill people”.

It is a matter of pride that the Assam Rifles has identified itself as an integral part of the people, sharing their joys and sorrows. This unique character of the Force makes it a most useful and distinguished arm of the Government, meant for the people and manned by the people. I do hope that this feature will be preserved while expansion takes place in future.

The Assam Rifles, like our other security forces, enrolls personnel hailing from all parts of India, belonging to all religions, castes and creeds, without any distinction. The Force is thus a true example of National Integration.

I am told that a large number of old officers, JCOs and personnel of the Force have gathered here to celebrate this 150th Anniversary. The nostalgic memories of their deep association and ties must have been revived on this memorable and historic occasion. I look forward to meeting the old soldiers whose blood, sweat and toil have made the Assam Rifles a formidable Force.

On the occasion of your 150th Anniversary Celebration, I congratulate all ranks of this glorious Force. I am sure that the colours presented to the Force will inspire you to discharge your duties with renewed zeal, courage and dedication.

## Guards of the Border

**I**T GIVES ME immense pleasure to release the Special Postage Stamp and First Day Cover to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Assam Rifles, which is the oldest para military force in our country. The release of the Stamp is a fitting tribute to the rich and proud heritage of this seasoned Force and an expression of appreciation of the excellent work being done by the brave and tough officers and men operating under difficult and inhospitable conditions of climate and terrain.

Assam Rifles deserves to be proud of celebrating the 150th Anniversary. It has carried out its mission, with devotion and dedication in some of the most difficult and remote areas in the North-East. Over the years its members have endeared themselves to the people of this region through their humane approach to the locals, their devotion to duty and their courage and professional excellence. They have thus come to be known as the "friends of the hill people".

The force has been carrying out, in an exemplary manner, its dual duties of guarding the International Frontier and helping the local administration. The history of this elite force is synonymous with the history of development in the North-Eastern region. It is heartening to learn that the force is on the threshold of an expansion and I am sure it will continue to fulfil its assigned role with renewed zeal and inspiration.

On this happy occasion, I convey my greetings and good wishes to all the members of Assam Rifles and their families.

I have great pleasure in releasing the First Day Cover and Postage Stamp, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Assam Rifles.

# Our Defence Services

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here amidst you all today and to have an opportunity to share some of my thoughts with you. The Defence Services Staff College is one of our oldest military institutions, whose location at this place dates back to 1947, the year of our Independence. This College is an important institution in our defence net work, imparting training to middle level officers belonging to all the three wings of our defence forces so as to prepare them for shouldering higher responsibilities as staff officers. It is heartening to know that there are also officers from many friendly countries undergoing training in this institution. I convey my greetings and best wishes to all of them. I am sure that they will carry back with them pleasant memories of their stay here. This interaction between officers of our country and other friendly countries, will contribute to strengthening the bonds of brotherhood and cooperation.

Constant and continuous training of officers responsible for the defence of the country is always necessary and essential, more so in these days of fast developing technology and rapidly changing security scenario in the world. Modern wars are becoming more and more, wars of scientists and technologists. Like in the days of yore, wars are no more confined to armed combatants in a far off place; but embrace the entire civilian population and touch all aspects of the nation's life. So much so, team work and coordination on the part of civilian as well as defence personnel working as staff officers are essential for successfully safeguarding the country against any threats. In this context, I feel happy to know that officers from civil services also attend some training courses in this College.

Besides laying a sound and self-sustaining industrial infrastructure, India has reached a stage of self-sufficiency in food. India occupies a prominent place among industrialised countries of the world today, with a promise of a great push forward. It is a matter of pride that India is on the way to meeting her energy requirements in future to an increasing degree from her own resources. In the same fashion, India is

forging ahead with self-confidence in the specialised and highly sophisticated fields like space research. All these developments—in industry, agriculture, education, health, science and technology—have contributed immensely in strengthening our defence capabilities.

I have had a glance at your training programme and I notice that the training programme is quite comprehensive and meets the needs of the hour.

We have to constantly study the changing phase and shades of the security environment in which we live; we cannot afford to study our security in isolation of what is happening in the world around us and about us. India is wedded to a policy of peace in the world and friendly relations with all. We want peace in the world, for the prosperity of all people in the world, not as an expediency but as a matter of principle.

The rivalry between major powers, the escalation of arms race and mounting tensions in our neighbourhood have all been creating a new security threat not only to India in particular, but to all countries in the region as well as to all developing countries in general. A time has come for all the developing countries to come closer and step up their efforts for increased cooperation among themselves, so as to reduce tensions in the world and to establish a new international economic order based on equality and justice. This is what India is striving for all these years because, reduction of tensions and establishment of a new world order is the only way to create a climate of peace in the world. I believe that all of you undergoing training here are quite well-versed in the contemporary developments which will have a direct bearing on our overall security.

India's defence forces have given a good account of themselves in the past thirty-eight years since independence and have enriched their glorious traditions. The morale and combat spirit of the defence forces are in good shape; I am sure these will be strengthened further with devotion and courage.

India's armed forces are unique in one way. Each Unit in each wing represents a mini-India with people from all parts of the country working together with a spirit of oneness and with unity in thought, word and deed. This itself is an effective weapon against forces of anarchy and chaos. The message of unity and integrity should reach everywhere and reverberate throughout the length and breadth of our motherland.

Before concluding, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to meet you all, and spend some time with you. I wish you success in your career of service to your motherland.

# Our Democratic System

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to greet you my fellow citizens on our thirty-seventh Republic Day tomorrow. On this happy occasion I convey my best wishes to you all.

The Republic Day is a joyous occasion for all of us. It reminds us that we are sovereign people and are makers and masters of our own national destiny. It also gives us an opportunity to evaluate our achievements and to ponder over the tasks yet to be undertaken and completed. A review of this nature helps us to face the future boldly and with greater self-confidence.

Our Republic is based on democracy, socialism and secularism. Tolerance and respect for one another are the hallmarks of our democratic system. A democracy harmonises the various forces at work and takes society towards a common goal. It works through various institutions within the framework of our Constitution. It is the duty of leaders of all political parties and every citizen of the country to ensure that these institutions work properly and harmony is maintained. This will further strengthen our democratic foundations. Since we became a Republic, we have gained rich experience in running democracy successfully.

It is a matter of pride for all of us that our electorate has exercised franchise in a mature and fearless manner and democracy has taken deep roots in our soil. While working within the framework of our Constitution, we have to maintain and strengthen the basic unity of the country. Adhering strictly to democratic ideals, we have to accelerate our economic progress. If we develop any differences, those can be resolved through discussion and mutual goodwill.

Political differences should not assume the overtones of hostility or enmity. There should be a healthy competition among political parties to formulate better programmes for greater welfare of the masses. The verdict of the electorate in a democracy is supreme. The will of the people shall prevail. We should learn to respect the sovereign wishes of the people with grace and spirit of service.

In the year that passed, there were shining examples of the working of our democratic system. The Punjab and Assam accords are models of democratic adjustments that have been welcomed by the people. This amply proves the existence of inner cohesion based on eternal values among the people throughout the country.

The ruling party and the opposition, whether at the all India level or at the level of States, together represent the collective will of the electorate as partners in the service of the people. Our democratic system allows for free expression of views, and this is necessarily reflected through the electoral process.

The unity of India comes above all other considerations. It is not only the political unity, but the unity of the spirit, sentiment and emotion, the roots of which lie deep in our national consciousness. These have been enriched by the teachings of spiritual leaders and guides throughout our history. It is based on eternal values like truth, love, compassion, tolerance and respect for others. These values have also been enshrined in our Constitution. It is, however, unfortunate that some decline in the observance of these values has been evident. It gives rise to many undesirable consequences. For this decline in values, we can only blame ourselves. It is no more possible to escape the responsibility for this in the name of transition. People look up to the leaders for high moral standards. Let all political parties set high moral values and sustain them with their own actions and deeds.

Rule of law is another cardinal principle of our democratic system. It guarantees equal protection of the law to every citizen. It also means the equality of every person before the majesty of the law. It is incumbent on every one to observe the laws. It is also the duty of all law enforcing agencies to implement the laws strictly in the interests of a peace loving society.

The country's economy has done well last year and the future course is well set with the launching of the Seventh Five Year Plan. The Plan calls for a sustained economic growth at 5 per cent per year. For achievement of this objective, a set of programmes and policies have been outlined. It is a matter of happiness to note that the main thrust in the Plan is on the special anti-poverty programmes. Continuance of poverty in any form and in any region is a threat to our stability and unity. Balanced economic growth with justice is a basic feature of our planning process. It is the only answer to meet emerging socio-economic aspirations.

It is gratifying to note that a major objective of the Seventh Plan is

to ensure that the growth of employment opportunities is faster than the growth of labour force. The task of the government is to facilitate increased production by promoting smooth relations between labour and capital. They have a vital role to play in the implementation of the Seventh Plan. The relations between management and labour should be such as to minimise avoidable friction which harms the national economy. Let us adhere to our philosophy of planning with the active participation of the people. I appeal to all implementing agencies of the Plan to work whole-heartedly for its success. It should alleviate growing restlessness among the people especially the educated youth in urban and rural areas.

India is one of those countries who are affected most by increasing population. The government and the people should keep this in sight. Measures have to be taken to plan the growth rate. At the same time perspective manpower planning is of paramount need keeping in view our economic resources, pace of development and the employment opportunities. This is a national problem and should be viewed as such by all sections of the people.

We have continued to strive for peace, disarmament and cooperation with all countries. Our actions are based on principles of non-alignment and the Charter of the United Nations. We have made special efforts to strengthen multilateral cooperation among the countries of our region. The establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation is a step in this direction. The high-level dialogue between the leaders of USSR and USA, which has been opened recently, is also a hopeful sign. I hope it will help to ease tension and the threat of nuclear confrontation. I also hope that the steps taken by our government to normalise relations with Pakistan and to help in finding a solution to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka will bear fruit soon.

The continued policy of racial discrimination in South Africa is still a black spot on the face of the human race. I do hope there will soon be light after the dark tunnel.

Our Defence Forces deserve the nation's appreciation for performing the onerous task of guarding our borders as well as assisting the people in natural calamities like floods and cyclones. Keeping with the needs of the time they have increased their professional skills and efficiency and are always vigilant to defend the country from any possible external threat. Their welfare merits the nation's continued attention.



With these words, I conclude by appealing to all of you, my countrymen, to maintain the nation's unity, cherish and preserve our cultural values and contribute our best to the fulfilment of the nation's commitment to secularism, socialism and democracy.

# Fulfil People's Aspirations

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome you to this first session of Parliament in 1986. I felicitate the new members. The year has seen Parliament transact its business in a purposeful manner and in an atmosphere of cooperation. I extend to you all my best wishes for the successful completion of the budgetary and legislative business that lies ahead.

In July, 1985, the Government took a major initiative to resolve the complex and difficult problems in Punjab. Our prime concern was to strengthen the forces of unity and integrity. Policy was governed by the perspective of serving the highest national interest. The democratic process triumphed over terrorism. The peaceful elections in Punjab testified to the desire of the overwhelming majority of the people for peace and normalcy in the State.

A great responsibility rests on those who have secured the mandate of the people. Their supreme task is to isolate those who are resorting to violence to disturb communal harmony and peace. In this task they will have the support of all political forces committed to the unity and integrity of India. There cannot be, and must not be, any compromise with the forces of disintegration. It is imperative that all secular and democratic forces join hands in a mass campaign to safeguard the values enshrined in our Constitution—nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism—the bedrock of India's unity.

The Assam settlement was followed by elections to the Legislative Assembly and the Lok Sabha. A new Government has taken office. Government are committed to the fullest implementation of the Punjab and Assam Accords.

Government express their deepest sympathy with the families of all those who lost their lives, or were injured, or suffered loss of property in violent incidents in different parts of the country. Violence in public life is the very antithesis of the ethos of our civilization. The frequent resort to violence to settle what are perceived as grievances of one group or another should deeply disturb those who uphold democratic values. While government must firmly put down violence wherever it

may occur, it is essential that political parties committed to democratic values should deal with the root causes of violence through purposive and sustained work among the people. The temptation to seek short-term advantages from communal and other types of violence must be eschewed. Communalism continues to pose a serious threat to national unity. It is being reinforced by religious fundamentalism and fanaticism. These trends represent a reactionary social outlook, directed against the struggle of the poor and the underprivileged against the vested interests. The reconstituted National Integration Council will have to act decisively and systematically to strengthen secularism.

In my Address on January 17, 1985, I had outlined the major policies and programmes of the Government. I recapitulate the main points:—

- (i) Commitment to a clean public life
- (ii) Administrative reforms
- (iii) Judicial reforms
- (iv) A new national education policy
- (v) A new national programme for women
- (vi) Participation of youth in programmes for promoting national integration and achieving excellence
- (vii) Establishment of a Wasteland Development Board
- (viii) Formation of a Central Ganga Authority
- (ix) A new textile policy and
- (x) Thorough examination of safety measures for industrial establishments

My Government have fulfilled in substantial measure the tasks they had set for themselves for the past year.

The Anti-Defection Act is now on the statute book. Contributions to political parties by the companies have been permitted by law. Government have endeavoured to set a new tone in public life. This has strengthened national confidence. A strong sense of involvement in public affairs among all sections of the people and a buoyant spirit have characterised the year that has gone by. We have to build on these assets to raise the standards of public life.

Vigorous steps have been taken to combat corruption and to improve the performance of the public services. Strong emphasis has been laid on sound personnel management and training of personnel at all levels. Machinery for redressal of public grievances is in place. Its results are being continuously evaluated. A new Ministry has been set

up to monitor the implementation of various programmes. All Departments of Government have been directed to formulate detailed action plans for the coming financial year, against which their progress will be judged. Administrative reform is a continuous process. Detailed exercises are underway to reorient the system to speedier decision making and better implementation.

Government are determined to eliminate delays in dispensation of justice. The experiment of Lok Adalats has proved that an innovative approach is required to cure this malady. The establishment of Administrative Tribunals will also lighten the burden of the courts, enabling them to devote more time to the liquidation of arrears. However, these are just the first steps in tackling the basic problem of making justice inexpensive and easily accessible to the poor. Drastic changes are needed. Government have entrusted to the Law Commission the task of recommending such changes.

Government published in August 1985, a status paper entitled "The Challenge of Education". This was intended to stimulate wide and intensive national debate on issues and alternatives. Government note with satisfaction that the debate has involved all sections of the people and many useful ideas and approaches have emerged. A draft of the new Education Policy will be presented shortly to Parliament.

Government have set up a new department to look after the development of women. A comprehensive national programme for women is being worked out. It will aim at enabling women to play their full part in developing a strong and modern nation.

Programmes for youth development have made considerable headway but much more has to be done in this area.

The Wasteland Development Board has been set up and has started work on an ambitious programme of afforestation. In a recent meeting, all the State Governments endorsed an integrated approach to a National Land Use Policy as well as the strategies and policies for wasteland development.

The Central Ganga Authority has come into existence. With the cooperation of the concerned State Governments, work has started in full swing on stopping the pollution of the Ganga.

A new textile policy was announced in June 1985. It aims at production of cheaper cloth for the people. An equally important objective of the policy is to protect the interests of handloom weavers. It is envisaged that in the Seventh Plan the entire production of 700 million sq. metres of controlled and *janata* cloth will be transferred to the handloom sector. The Handlooms. (Reservation of Articles for

Production) Act, 1985 has been passed to strengthen this vital sector which provides livelihood to millions. Steps are being taken to ensure full and efficient implementation of the policy.

Government have completed examination of issues relating to industrial safety and management of hazardous substances and legislation will be introduced in this session of Parliament.

Government will establish seven zonal cultural centres—three have already been set up—to promote a sense of cultural cohesion. These centres, cutting across territorial and linguistic boundaries, would project the rich diversity of regional cultural traditions and their underlying unity. They would take the best of our culture to the masses, harmonising it with their lives and struggles. Their essential thrust would be to break the artificial barriers created during the colonial era between the masses and the living tradition of India's age-old culture in all its forms. The centres will also aim at revitalising folk art which has enriched the country's cultural life.

I would now refer to the major trends in our economy.

The Seventh Five Year Plan was approved by the National Development Council. The basic strategy of the Plan is cast in a long term perspective of eradication of poverty and building a strong, self-reliant and modern economy. The Plan sharpens the focus on the anti-poverty programmes which will have an expanded coverage. It also envisages adequate investments in the core sectors to strengthen the growth potential of the national economy.

The fulfilment of the Plan requires total commitment and determination to mobilise adequate resources for investment. To translate the vision of a strong, prosperous, self-reliant India into reality requires unremitting toil and capacity to sacrifice and to bear hardship. Adequate savings have to be mobilised to pursue a non-inflationary path of development. More importantly, these savings have to be used effectively. The challenge has to be met. There are no short cuts to development, no alternatives to hard work.

Vigorous implementation of anti-poverty programmes yielded significant results. The Sixth Five Year Plan aimed at assisting 15 million families under the Integrated Rural Development Programme; 16.6 million families were actually covered, of which 6.4 million belonged to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. These programmes are being strengthened and surplus foodgrains stocks will be used in 1986-87 to expand the National Rural Employment Programme and the Rural Landless Employment

Guarantee Programme to cover one million additional families. An amount of Rs. 100 crores has been provided annually during the Seventh Five Year Plan for the construction of housing for the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and freed bonded labour.

By the end of March, 1985, of a total of 2.31 lakh problem villages lacking safe drinking water supply, 1.92 lakh villages had been provided with at least one source of water supply. During 1985-86 the programme was further accelerated.

In 1985-86, agriculture continued to make steady progress. In November 1985, foodgrains stocks with Government were higher by nearly 15% over 1984. This has enabled Government to launch a scheme for distributing wheat and rice at specially subsidised rates in tribal areas and to other vulnerable sections, especially the Scheduled Castes, expectant mothers, children, etc. A comprehensive crop insurance scheme has been introduced in specified areas for the *kharif* crop. Government are considering further expansion of such schemes.

During the first seven months of 1985-86, industrial production grew at the rate of 6.3%. The policy initiatives of Government have created a buoyant investment climate. The infrastructural industries have performed well. Compared with the first nine months of the last year, power generation was up by 8.2%; saleable steel production by 12.9%; fertilizer production by more than 10%. Our ports handled 13.2% more cargo and the railways created an all time record in freight traffic movement.

In 1985-86 the Central Plan outlays were stepped up by 15% over 1984-85, specially on anti-poverty programmes, human resource development and infrastructure. There was considerable increase in the outlays of State Plans. Government will have spent in 1985-86 Rs. 1650 crores on food subsidy and Rs. 2050 crores on fertilizer subsidy. Public distribution system was strengthened and prudent management of supplies prevented shortages. It is gratifying that a significant increase in public investment was achieved.

Tax collections have been buoyant, belying gloomy forebodings. The collection of direct taxes is up by about 23% compared to the corresponding period last year. Indirect tax collection has increased by 22%. Total tax collections have increased by 22% which is the highest in the last decade. An effective drive was launched against tax evaders, smugglers and blackmarketeers. Action has also been taken against personnel found guilty of colluding with economic offenders. Government are determined to cleanse the economic life and to fight the evil of black money.

For the first time, a long-term fiscal policy co-terminous with the Five Year Plan has been announced. A long-term direction to economic policy has been provided. Government are confident that the policy will ensure economic growth and speedier expansion of productive investment and employment opportunities.

It is necessary to focus attention on the structural problems of the economy to further our basic objective of growth with social justice. India's development depends upon steadily rising levels of public investment. How are these investments to be financed? Massive investments made in the previous Plans must yield adequate returns. Costs of production have to be reduced. Every paisa of national savings has to be put to the most productive use. Otherwise it will be difficult to find real resources for the larger and larger investments required for maintaining the tempo of self-reliant growth, for enlarging our anti-poverty programmes and for preserving our economic independence. Sooner or later, sooner rather than later, we have to face the realities of the situation. No one should be under the delusion that growth, social justice, price stability and self-reliance are achievable without efficiency, discipline and sharing of burdens. Contemporary history warns us of such pitfalls.

We must reduce the costs of our inputs and prices of final products and services. We cannot afford the luxury of pricing out of both the domestic and the export markets. A modern industrial society cannot rise on the basis of continuing low levels of productivity and high costs of production. New jobs cannot be created if existing enterprises incur losses year after year. Operational inefficiency increases the cost of production and is inevitably reflected in increased prices which are a burden on the people. It raises costs all round, reducing real investment.

The future of the planning process depends on our capacity to face up to difficult questions and to take hard decisions, decisions that may involve sacrifices but without which forward movement will not be possible. Growth is absolutely vital to raise the standards of living of the poor. Can we evade decisions that protect and strengthen this development process? Nations are built by generations that sacrifice for a better tomorrow.

The balance of payments position poses a similar challenge. Our exports have remained sluggish in 1985-86 but our imports have increased. The imports of petroleum products and edible oils are well above the limits the country can afford. The question basically is

whether we want to stand on our own feet or not. If we do, there is no question why we should not curb the growth of consumption of petroleum products and also be self-sufficient in oilseeds. We also have to have a fresh look at our imports of capital goods. We do not want to shut out new technology because that will harm us, but we have to make sure that such technology meets the rigorous criteria of essentiality. External financial flows are needed but Government are determined that India is never at the mercy of foreign banks and institutions. Economic independence and self-reliance are central to our philosophy of development. We shall pay whatever price is required to maintain our economic independence.

The primary objectives of our foreign policy continue to be the promotion of non-alignment, advocacy of peace and nuclear disarmament, enlarging the area of friendship and cooperation and building of a just world order. We welcome the resumption of high level dialogue between the USSR and USA. It is imperative to take urgent steps to bring about a freeze in the nuclear arms race and a comprehensive nuclear weapon test ban treaty. The Six-Nation initiative has called for these measures. The Delhi Declaration of January, 1985 has had a good impact on public opinion throughout the world. The leaders of the six countries are in touch with one another about further steps.

During the last one year the atmosphere in the sub-continent has distinctly improved. We have succeeded in making progress with our neighbours in many fields. But we remain concerned about the ethnic situation in Sri Lanka and Pakistan's continued pursuit of a nuclear weapon capability. We remain convinced that the situation in Sri Lanka can be settled only through political means; attempts to seek a military solution will fail and will only result in the loss of a large number of innocent lives. The Government welcome the establishment of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) launched in Dhaka in December, 1985. We expect that it will help strengthen forces of friendship and cooperation in our region. The Government have made untiring efforts towards the resolution of the major areas of tension. At the Commonwealth Meeting in the Bahamas in October, in which the Prime Minister participated, our delegation played a leading role in the adoption of the Commonwealth Accord on South Africa. We continue to demand comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the racist regime in South Africa. If the authorities there, and other Governments in a



position to influence South Africa, do not act in time, violence on large scale will become unavoidable.

The Prime Minister also attended the 40th anniversary of the United Nations. The Nassau Declaration on World Order, adopted by Commonwealth leaders, contained a strong plea for adherence to international norms and principles and the strengthening of the United Nations. Support for the United Nations system is one of the corner-stones of our foreign policy. We are concerned at the growing threat to the multilateral institutions and the increasing tendency to resort to unilateral action. Government support international efforts to combat international terrorism, while recognising the rights of people under colonial occupation to use all means to attain their just objectives.

The Government deplore the fact that the Palestinian people continue to be denied their inalienable rights, including the right to an independent homeland of their own. Until this basic problem is tackled, West Asia will not see a lasting peace.

The Prime Minister paid official visits to the USSR, Egypt, France, Algeria, USA, Bhutan, UK, Cuba, Netherlands, Vietnam, Japan, Oman and Maldives. Our traditionally close and friendly relations with the USSR have been further strengthened following the Prime Minister's discussions with Soviet leaders in Moscow. The visit to USA has significantly enlarged the content of our bilateral relations with the USA. The Prime Minister visited Dhaka to express our solidarity with the people of Bangladesh during the cyclone disaster and participated in the meeting of Heads of State and Government for launching the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. The Prime Minister addressed the UNESCO during his visit to France. He addressed the annual conference of the I.L.O. in Geneva. We had the privilege to host visits by the Kings of Nepal and Bhutan, the Queen of the Netherlands, the Presidents of Mexico, Maldives, SWAPO, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Indonesia and Pakistan, the Chairman of PLO, the Head of State of Ethiopia and the Prime Minister of Poland, Yugoslavia, Mauritius, Britain, New Zealand, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and Trinidad & Tobago. The Crown Prince and Princess of Norway and the Pope also visited India.

Let me now outline some priority areas for 1986-87 and beyond. The need of the hour is to enable the poor to better their lives. Science and technology have to support this fundamental objective. To this

end, Government are mounting technology missions in the following areas:—

- (i) Drinking water for all villages;
- (ii) Eradication of illiteracy;
- (iii) Vaccination and immunisation of children;
- (iv) Production of oilseeds and manufacture of edible oils;
- (v) Improved communication;

In the course of the year more thrust areas will be identified with the object of using technology for improving productivity in industry and agriculture. In selected areas science and technology missions will endeavour to place India in the front rank of scientific activity.

A comprehensive agriculture policy will be formulated to promote an optimal cropping pattern to improve water and soil management, to increase productivity of all crops, to enhance the incomes of small and marginal farmers and to enlarge our hard-won self-sufficiency in foodgrains through higher production of oilseeds and pulses. A time-bound action plan will be drawn up to take the green revolution to the eastern region. It is gratifying that a national consensus has emerged on treating water as a national resource. Government attach high priority to the evolution of a national water policy which would optimise the use of water for agricultural, industrial and other social needs.

Government have carried out an indepth analysis of our family planning programmes. Profiting from the experience of the past, a more effective strategy for family planning is being worked out and will be announced shortly.

The focus on anti-poverty programmes will be sharpened. A new programme, which builds on the success achieved by the revised 20-Point Programme, is being formulated and will be announced soon. It will bring together all the elements, policies and programmes for a major national effort to tackle the problem of mass poverty in all its manifestations, specifically the problems of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Programmes for the social, economic, educational and cultural development for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections will be vigorously implemented. The implementation of the 15-Point Programme for the development of minorities, with special emphasis on increasing economic opportunities, will be closely monitored.

To rapidly increase employment, to stimulate development in backward areas and to enhance the efficiency of Indian industry to

serve the masses better, a more comprehensive framework of industrial policy is required. Many changes have already been made in our industrial policy which now reflects the new thrust for modernisation, absorption of new technologies and promotion of indigenous technologies. High cost and inefficient industry hurts the poor, because it absorbs resources that are needed to create new jobs for them. A vast increase in the production of goods and services for the masses in rural and urban areas is central to our strategy for the removal of poverty. This necessitates a fresh look at policies governing scale of production, capacity utilisation, the role of indigenous technology, labour productivity, the detailed regulatory mechanism, the future perspectives for small and medium industry and the existing administrative and management apparatus. Industry must serve the large masses.

To meet the challenge of maintaining a viable balance of payments position, a major thrust for promotion of exports and tourism is called for. Any slackening of progress on this front will jeopardise our overall development strategy. Government will take new initiatives in this critical area.

It is imperative to effect changes in our administrative system to bring it in tune with the objective of growth with social justice. Management in Government has to be imbued with a new social outlook. It is not a question of imposing something from above. The impetus to reform must come from within. The national community as a whole must debate issues affecting the working of the administrative system. A concrete agenda of action will thus emerge for implementation. Our watchwords must be improvement of efficiency and enforcement of accountability.

To safeguard the health and vitality of our basic political institutions, changes will be needed in our electoral and other laws. Government will hold wide-ranging consultations with the leaders of political parties with a view to formulating concrete proposals to ensure cleaner public life.

The vision of a mighty India will be realised only in the actual lives of men and women who have strength of character.

## A Language of Masses

I AM HAPPY to be present here and to distribute Awards instituted by the Department of Official Languages for promotion of Hindi. The scheme to present Shields to Ministries/Departments for the progressive use of Hindi, as Official Language, is laudable step. I congratulate all Ministries, Offices and Officials who have won the awards.

Hindi has been made the Official Language in our Constitution and it is the duty of the Government to develop and increase its use in Government offices. Though this job has been entrusted to the Department of Official Languages, Ministry of Home Affairs, all the Ministries, Departments, Public Undertakings and Establishments should give their full contribution towards this. They should give more and more encouragement to the use of Hindi in their Offices so that Hindi can be given the status of Official Language in its true spirit. But this should be done with great love, goodwill and cooperation of all.

The founding fathers of our Constitution had given this position to Hindi after deep thought and far-sightedness. It is not because Hindi is a rich language but because it is spoken and understood by the majority of people. I do agree that certain languages of India are quite rich and ancient. But Hindi is the only language which can be used as link language. It absorbs the words from all languages and its flexibility is the quality for its being popular. In 1919, late Shri Zahur Bux said that India could not flourish without the development of Hindi. There is no conflict between other Indian Languages and Hindi. It can not be developed at the cost of other regional languages. All the Indian languages are ours and the literature of all these languages is that of our country. Hindi is most helpful in keeping this country united. We have to develop it as a link language.

In 1918, while presiding over the Eighth Conference of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Mahatma Gandhi said, "it is my opinion that only Hindi can be and it should be the National Language of India". In the

same year, he established the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha in South India. Mahatma Gandhi wanted to reduce the gap between the administration and public, and, therefore, he was in favour of a language of masses. Once he had stated that "If Swaraj was meant for English speaking Indian, then certainly the English would be national language, but if the Swaraj is meant for millions of starving people, illiterates, down-troddens and for all, then Hindi was the only language which could be national language."

Hindi should be made so simple that everyone can speak and express their views easily in this language. The main object of the translation is that one who can not understand English, he can follow in Hindi. My appeal is that simple words should be used while translating and using Hindi in Government offices for official work. I am happy to know that Department of Official Languages has issued necessary instructions for the use of simple Hindi in Government offices. In this respect the saying of Mahatma Gandhi will guide us, "that language is the best which could be understood easily by the masses."

Political Independence only is not complete itself, we have to be mentally independent and to achieve this mental freedom, we have to develop our own languages. Gandhiji used to say that no country in true sense is independent unless and until she did not speak her language. It is, therefore, necessary that we should use Hindi more and more in our day-to-day work and even in foreign countries as far as possible. Every developed country has her own official language and they develop that language with the pace of their progress.

Though the number of English speaking is the greatest in the world, the number of Hindi speaking persons is also not less. They are forth as regards to their number. Several times we have to be ashamed of not using our own language in the foreign countries. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in his address at Madras in 1958 has said: "During my travels abroad the question of what language to speak in has often embarrassed me. Even in countries other than England, I have had to speak to the people in the English language. What is more, I have had to speak to my own countrymen in the English language. That practice astonished the people of those countries. A student once asked: "Have you no language of your own?"

I am glad to know that technical terminologies of different subjects have been prepared and further progress is being made in this direction. There should be no hesitation in adopting the words from

other languages. Dr. Rajendra Prasad had advocated for adopting the words from other languages as it would enrich the vocabulary of Hindi language. Hindi will be flourished with the contribution of all people from every part of the country.

It is heartening to know that electronic equipments are now also being made in our country for the use of Hindi. Department of Official Languages have organised an exhibition in Delhi and other places of the country to exhibit these electronic equipments so that people may have the knowledge of these aids and use them in their day-to-day work. Some institutions are manufacturing bilingual machines. I hope this will go a long way in the disposal of official business with speed and more conveniently.

I hope the engineers of our country which are second to none will be helpful in this respect. They will work on the lines that the latest development in the field of technology may be used in such a way that may suit to our needs and we will not be dependent on English.

I have been told that more than 80 per cent employees of nearly all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India possess working knowledge of Hindi and these offices have been notified. But, it is wonderous that inspite of all these, these offices are not able to carry on their business in Hindi. Why it is so? This aspect must be considered over.

I am told that the higher officers from all Ministries/Departments are taking part in this Conference. All of you should endeavour to find a solution of all the obstacles and hindrances coming in the way of use of Hindi as official language in the Government Offices. I hope you will be successful to overcome all these obstacles and we will strive to achieve the goal speedily.

I once again heartily congratulate all the award winners and give my best wishes. I hope that other Ministries and Departments will also strive to win these awards in the coming years.

## Builders of the Nation

**I** AM HAPPY to be present at this function for giving away Shram Vir National Awards and the National Safety Awards. Our workers are the builders of the Nation. They have a very important role to play in the development of our country. It is because of their hard work that the country is in a position to fulfill the needs of the masses.

I felicitate the winners of the 1984 Shram Vir National Awards, as also the persons being honoured with the National Safety Awards. They have all set an illustrious example of their endeavours and efficiency before the country and I do hope that in future many more will try to emulate their worthy example.

Our workers, especially those working in mines have to perform their tasks in difficult circumstances, as they help produce valuable mineral wealth. Our Constitution has entrusted to the State the responsibility of ensuring just and humane conditions of work for every worker. Government has accordingly enacted legislation on the health, safety and welfare of workers. Inspection agencies have also been set up to ensure compliance with the statutory provisions under the enactments. I understand that the relevant Acts are being made stricter and inspection machinery reinforced. But I would like to stress that the legislation provides only the basic and minimum requirements. It can be possible only with the joint efforts of management and workers to ensure health, safety and welfare of working class. We are committed to create conditions of work in which the workers may enjoy perfect health. We shall have to do a great deal more to ensure the safety and welfare measures for our workers. We all know that the prosperity and economic development of our country depends a great deal on its industrialisation. For ensuring a better standard of living for our people, it is vital that the production tempo should be increased. But this increased tempo of industrial activity should not be at the cost of workers' safety, health or welfare. For ensuring optimum industrial production and efficiency, it is essential to provide the workers a safe and healthy working environment. To minimise occupational health hazards and

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Speech while presenting Shram Vir National Awards and the National Safety Awards.  
New Delhi, July 9, 1986

to prevent accidents, it is necessary to take all possible measures. Endeavours have also to be made to check pollution in the factories. Strenuous efforts have to be made to prevent industrial accidents, which result in injuries to workers.

The National Commission on Labour had said as far back as 1969 that "Safety should become a habit with employers and workers. At present, it has assumed a form of a ritual. The employer provides safety devices if he must; the worker uses the safety equipment, if at all he does it, to complete a formality" In my view the circumstances today are not much better than in the past. We shall have to change the old psychology and make safety of workers a national movement. The industrial structure that we are building must make the worker feel that he is not merely a cog in vast machine, but one of its conscious regulators.

The National Safety Workers' Awards were instituted in 1965 and so were the Shram Vir Awards. I have been told that Shram Vir National Awards are being restyled as Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar for 1985. This award recognises the efforts of our workers in improving the performance of a Unit.

Acceptance of suggestion from workers, and their implementation, can give a deep sense of involvement to them. I am confident that such suggestions by workers would continue to increase the national industrial output. They can feel that they are instrumental in participating in the life and work of the organisation, and in its betterment in a positive, tangible and concrete way. I am sure that such suggestions and schemes can have the most beneficial effects on employer-employees relations.

I am happy to know that many of the suggestions have led to savings in foreign exchange and import substitution. I would commend to all the enlightened managements to introduce such schemes in their establishments. These would increase our efficiency and strengthen our confidence, and the country would move to achieve its goal of self-reliance.

I have seen from the report that in 1982 in registered factories there were over 3 lakhs injuries to workers, out of which 599 proved fatal. The National Safety Awards can prove a powerful instrument in bringing down the accident rate.

I once again felicitate the winners of the awards. I also hope that more and more workers and organisations will actively participate in future in both the National Safety Awards and Vishwakarma Rashtriya Awards Schemes.



## Dedication and Service

I AM GLAD to be associated with the inaugural session of the Annual Conference of ex-MPs' Association today. I understand that this Association formed in 1972, commands a membership of about 500 ex-MPs. These former legislators belong to various political parties and come from different parts of the country. This really lends the Association a national complexion. The role of legislators in our country, especially in Parliament is very important. They make the laws to govern the country and the laws have to be such as to conform to our needs as a developing country with diverse culture, languages, faiths and religions and different social norms.

A Member of Parliament in our country, though he may belong to a particular political party and may profess a certain faith, has to adopt a national outlook for the welfare of millions of people and to safeguard the interests of the nation as a whole. A Member of Parliament who is elected by a vast electorate, has to be a person of wide outlook, maturity of thought and wisdom and a catholic and humane views. A Member of the Central Legislature has a term of normally 5 years during which he gains vast experience and gets an opportunity to form an overall view of the problems and issues faced by the nation as a whole. Some members do get re-elected to Parliament, but when they ultimately retire, or those who get only one term as MP become ex-MPs. They can contribute a great deal to the welfare of the nation by lending their wisdom and experience for the common good of all.

In such a vast country as ours, many committees, councils etc. are set up by the Government and semi-governmental bodies, where knowledge and experience of ex-MPs could be of use, especially in social and cultural matters like health, environment and family welfare.

The biggest challenge our country is facing since Independence is that of emotional integration. Our National leaders and the common

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Speech at the inauguration of the Annual Conference of Ex-MPs' Association at Mavlankar Auditorium, New Delhi, December 5, 1986

man made tremendous sacrifices to get rid of the foreign yoke in the hope of building a united and prosperous India. It was a dream of our freedom fighters that we should live in peace and harmony and become a formidable economic and political force in the world. Though we have been making steady progress in every field, yet parochialism and selfish interests have been trying to hinder our progress by creating acrimony and dissensions among various sections of the people.

Let us take a specific instance of removal of untouchability. Mahatma Gandhi gave us a lead in the upliftment of the downtrodden and backward sections of the society and preached complete equality among all citizens of the country. The founding fathers of our Constitution also guaranteed equality of status and opportunity for all citizens without any discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth. Yet it could not be said that this spirit has been imbibed by all of us and no discrimination is practised on the basis of caste and religion. In actual practice the evil of casteism persists in the minds of some people, which is a sad commentary on our professions of equality. I would suggest to my ex-MP friends to give a thought to this aspect and contribute their talent and experience as leaders of public opinion to ensure practical equality. They may also do their best to instil in the minds of our people in cities, towns and farflung areas of the country the concept of unity and integrity of the nation. This way they will be rendering a substantial service to the motherland.

Another thing my ex-MP friends would like to bear in mind is the crisis of character that has come to stay in our social fabric. The canker of corruption, adulteration, smuggling, black-marketing, drug-addiction and other evils has been silently gaining ground in our life. It would be a solid and concrete service to the nation if ex-MPs would devote their time and attention to eradicate these undesirable and dangerous practices.

I understand that 5 years ago, the ex-MPs' Association had a membership of about 150, which has now grown to about 500. I feel satisfied to learn that ex-MPs have been issued with Identity Cards, which would make their visits to Government offices and Departments easier. Former members of Parliament deserve consideration and respect and, I hope, the Government and the public would accord them their due place. A large number of former Members of Parliament took active part in the freedom movement

and made considerable sacrifices. They worked tirelessly and sincerely in Parliament. Every citizen owes a duty to the nation to work for its welfare and greatness, but former MPs have much greater share of dedication and service to offer to the country. I wish them many more happy, comfortable and purposeful years of life. I wish the deliberations of the Annual Conference of Ex-MPs' Association a great success.

## Founder of our Constitution

**T**ODAY WE ARE observing the Death Anniversary of a great son of India, Jurist and social leader, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. I am taking the privilege of laying the foundation stone of a monument being built in the memory of this greatman. He was one of the most eminent personalities of this country, who left deep imprint on social and political life of our society.

Dr. Ambedkar made great contributions in framing our Constitution. As Chairman of the Drafting Committee he played a significant role in delineating the political future of this country. After Independence he became the first Law Minister. It was under his guidance that in the Directive Principles of State Policy, it was provided that children up to the age of 14 should receive free and compulsory education and that this task should be completed within 10 years of the promulgation of the Constitution. But it is a matter of regret that we have not been able to achieve this target so far. Our democracy cannot function efficiently due to rampant lack of education. At present about 64 per cent of our population is illiterate. Due to lack of education, we have not been able to obliterate the curse of child labour.

Dr. Ambedkar was an ardent supporter of social and economic equality. He used to lay great emphasis on the spirit of fraternity. He considered casteism as anti-national. He had started a crusade against social inequalities. He raised his voice against blind faith, injustice, social and economic disparities.

His advice to the youths was that they should serve the society on completion of their education and the future of the nation depends upon the spirit of their service and sacrifice. It is their duty to uplift the poor and the downtrodden.

Dr. Ambedkar was Messiah for the backward and the exploited. We shall continue to be guided by the light shown by him at present and in the future. Today on his 30th Death Anniversary, we have to re-dedicate ourselves to his principles and to derive inspiration from them.

Dr. Ambedkar pleaded for the same treatment to the agriculture labourers as to industrial workers. He wanted them to have the same facilities and amenities.

People in India profess various faiths and belong to different communities. Our composite culture is our heritage. No religion preaches violence. Dr. Ambedkar adopted the Buddhist faith in 1956. Today the cancer of violence is eating into the soul of our country. Democracy cannot function successfully in an atmosphere of violence. We can strengthen this vast country by lending greater strength to democratic system.

I am happy that Prof. B.P. Maurya, with the help of his colleagues and friends, is establishing the Ambedkar Youth Centre, which will impart education to the boys and girls in their respective mother tongues in the interest of casteless and classless society. Here education in the national language—Hindi will be compulsory. I am glad to know that preference will be given to poor children, whose education will be totally free. I felicitate Prof. Maurya for his constructive efforts.

With these words, I felicitate the office bearers of the Ambedkar Youth Centre and I take this opportunity to pay my tributes to Baba Saheb Ambedkar by laying the Foundation Stone of this Centre being set up in his memory.

# One Country One People

ON THE EVE of our thirty-eighth Republic Day tomorrow, I extend to you all, my countrymen, my most cordial greetings and warm wishes.

Republic Day reminds us of the lofty ideals of socialism, secularism and democracy, we set for ourselves. It is also an occasion to rededicate ourselves to the high values of justice, liberty and equality, we solemnly resolved to secure to all the citizens of the Republic.

On this sacred day, my thoughts go to those men and women who went through untold sufferings and made tremendous sacrifices to liberate the country from foreign domination. I pay my respectful homage to their hallowed memory.

It is the foremost duty of every citizen to maintain the unity and defend the integrity of the nation. Our hard won freedom has to be protected at all costs and the forces of disunity and disruption have to be defeated in their designs. Since I spoke to you on this occasion last year, there has been an escalation in violence in some parts of the country. Communal and divisive forces are threatening to weaken the fabric of our secular society. Our democratic system and federal structure provide the necessary mechanism for people to voice their genuine grievances and seek peaceful solutions. Timely action should be taken to look into the grievances and take remedial action. We should not allow an atmosphere of distrust to develop.

On an occasion like this we should dispassionately take stock of our successes and failures and move forward with hope and determination. Over the past six years, the economy has grown at 5 per cent or higher. Despite persistent drought, our agriculture has demonstrated a remarkable resilience, and food-grain production has crossed the 150 million tonnes mark. The country has large stocks of foodgrains which ensure food security. Industrial growth has been buoyant, thanks to the dynamism of the new industries. But at the same time there are certain areas of concern which require our attention like population growth, unemployment, prices, and some persisting social evils. It is not the Government alone nor the people

alone who can effectively deal with these problems. It requires the combined efforts of the Government and the people to bring these problems under control.

The real benefits of development can be had in the long run only if we tackle our population growth effectively. In this task the active participation and cooperation of the people have to be enlisted. Family welfare should be developed into a mass movement. Social and attitudinal changes have to be brought about through sustained endeavours. Voluntary organisations have to supplement the efforts of the Government in this regard.

The country is facing a gigantic unemployment problem. The government has taken several measures to generate more employment opportunities both in the urban and rural areas. But the task is so stupendous that some more innovative steps will be needed in the coming years.

Since Independence, we have reversed the ratio of those living above and below the poverty line. Instead of two-thirds, now about 36 per cent of our rural population is living below the poverty line. The programmes for the poor have been substantially stepped up in the recent years. The structure of the society in rural areas is such that the poor are in a highly vulnerable position. They have to be saved from exploitation. It is therefore necessary to have massive programmes for the alleviation of poverty and ensure that every rupee that is provided for these programmes confers the intended benefits on the beneficiaries. It is of utmost importance to simultaneously keep a check on the prices.

Acceleration of industrial growth is essential for our economic development. The balanced growth of agriculture and industry and the production of mass consumption goods of high quality at reasonable prices must remain a central theme of our policies. We should take note of the rise in trade deficit from Rupees 5318 crores during the previous year to Rupees 8616 crores in 1985-86. The exports have started showing a rising trend. We should make sustained efforts to wipe out the trade deficit. I hope our industry will show the necessary dynamism to respond to the needs of the economy.

The Directive Principles of State Policy enjoin upon every Government the obligation to secure a system which may provide children with opportunities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. Children and youth are to be protected against exploitation and moral and material abandonment.

In this area, though the country has made commendable progress, there is still great scope for accelerating our efforts to reach the desired goal. Children and youth should be safeguarded from the evil influences of casteism and communalism. They should be enabled to develop an egalitarian outlook and contribute to orderly social change and national reconstruction. It should also keep in focus our obligation to promote the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes.

Women have always been given a highly respectable place in our society. Though during the last four decades a great deal has been done to curb the social evils like dowry women are subjected to, there is still much more to be done to secure for them their rightful place in our society as equal partners in our progress and prosperity.

In a country where for centuries the people have set for themselves high spiritual and moral values, it is unfortunate that with the advent of economic progress some people have found it convenient to abandon these values. Adulteration of food and drugs, blackmarketing, tax evasion and corruption have become serious problems in our society. We must tackle them with determination so that the fruits of progress will be available to one and all equitably.

India is the largest democracy in the world. We have a significant role to play in international affairs. We have consistently taken a bold stand on international issues and raised our voice in favour of the weak, the oppressed and the exploited. We have tried to focus world attention on the need for nuclear disarmament as also for imposing mandatory sanctions against the racist regime of South Africa.

The recent visit of the Soviet leader, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev has reaffirmed our friendship with USSR. We appreciate the sincerity and steadfastness of the Soviet Union. Ours is, perhaps, the best example of bilateral relationship and enduring cooperation. In the true spirit of non-alignment, India seeks close and friendly relations with all nations, irrespective of blocs and political systems. We shall continue to work for greater cohesion in the Non-aligned Movement and for greater understanding with our immediate neighbours.

The security of the nation is our foremost concern. Our Armed Forces have been maintaining constant vigil on our borders, along our long coast line and in our national air space. They have been keeping in step with modern defence technology and have been upgrading their skills to face any challenge. They have also assisted civil



authorities in national calamities and in our hours of need. They are a symbol of national unity. They deserve the nation's deep appreciation for their high morale, discipline and dedicated service.

To conclude, I would like to say, my brothers and sisters, that the Constitution has enjoined upon me as President the duty to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the Law. I have at all times done my best to discharge this duty with devotion. I have endeavoured my utmost to maintain and strengthen the unity of India.

Let all religions flourish, all cultures blossom and all regions thrive. But it is of paramount importance for us to remember that we are one country, one nation, one people. To survive as such, we have to rise above all narrow considerations and take pride in 'our common identity and single entity as Indians. We share a common destiny and must strive to build a brighter future for posterity.

# Build A Strong India

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome you to this first session of Parliament in 1987. I extend to you my best wishes for the successful completion of the budgetary and legislative business ahead.

In 1986 many of the gains made from the thorough and comprehensive policy changes initiated in several key areas were consolidated. At the same time it was a year in which the country was called upon to grapple with challenges, external as well as internal, to its unity and integrity. Our secular, democratic structure is boldly facing the forces of communalism and separatism. Nothing will ever shake the people of India from their adherence to the basic principles of democracy, secularism and socialism which inform our Republic.

In Punjab the forces of democracy, unity, progress and secularism continue to be engaged in the struggle to isolate and wipe out the anti-national elements which are guided and controlled by foreign sources. Under the leadership of the Chief Minister, Shri S.S. Barnala, the State Government and the people of Punjab, have shown exemplary courage in upholding the values of secular democracy. The people of Punjab have always been in the forefront to defend the unity and integrity of India. They played a historic role in the freedom struggle which has left the imperishable imprint of secularism and democracy on their mind and spirit. It is, therefore, not surprising that they have stood up to the blatantly unconstitutional effort to subvert the democratic process through a sinister exploitation of religious sentiments. In flagrant violation of the sacred tenets and traditions of the great religion founded by Guru Nanak, a small section has turned religious functionaries and holy shrines into instruments of terror and subversion. Today this is the central issue in Punjab. Government will not allow the enemies of India's unity and integrity to abuse and misuse religion for their nefarious ends of creating communal disharmony and of unleashing violence and hatred in Punjab. All patriotic, secular, democratic and progressive forces have to unite to build the strength of the people to overcome the reactionary, fascist

and anti-national elements who are misguiding and confusing the masses in the name of religion. The challenge faces us all. No one can remain on the sidelines.

As the nation approaches the 40th anniversary of our freedom, it is fully conscious of the dangers posed by religious obscurantism and communalism. It was in April, 1948 that the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) passed a resolution calling upon Government to take steps to eliminate communalism from India's political life. The Father of the Nation had been assassinated barely two months earlier. Memories of the ghastly killing were still fresh in the minds of our Constitution makers. The threat to the unity of India from communalism loomed large before them. As we went ahead on our path of planned development, we began to assume that social and economic progress would automatically weaken the communal outlook. Experience has, however, shown that the communal and fundamentalist forces, aided and abetted by external elements, are challenging our basic values of nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism. Indiraji's martyrdom was to defend the same sacred cause of the unity and integrity of India against the evil designs of communalists and reactionaries. These nefarious forces constitute a deeper malady which has persisted inspite of demonstrable progress in socio-economic sphere. The situation clearly calls for a reappraisal and Government propose a national dialogue for this purpose. Our precious heritage of unity in diversity can be preserved only by fighting all divisive forces.

There can be no better way of celebrating the 40th anniversary of freedom and the birth centenary of the architect of modern India; Jawaharlal Nehru, than concerted and resolute action to remove the cancerous cells of communalism from our body politic. The National Committee for these celebrations, headed by the Vice-President of India, will devise a comprehensive programme to inculcate secular values and scientific temper.

While the Government were engaged in controlling extremist activities in Punjab, a new danger appeared on our borders. In January, 1987, Pakistan deployed strike formations in a menacing posture threatening Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir. As Members are aware, our borders are largely manned by para-military forces. Faced with this situation, the Government had to deploy our armed forces for safeguarding the borders. Serious tension was generated by the forward movement of Pakistani forces. The Prime Minister took the

initiative for immediate talks between the two Governments. An agreement on measures to de-escalate the situation was reached during negotiations between the two Governments held in Delhi recently and Pakistan agreed to withdraw their Army Reserve North from the Ravi-Chenab corridor. Further talks will be held in Islamabad. India's policy is based on peace and cooperation with all nations. Government have taken various measures to strengthen cooperation with our neighbours. While determined to preserve our sovereignty and integrity, India is prepared to remove all causes of tension and distrust between the two countries in the spirit of bilateral cooperation embodied in the Shimla Agreement.

The Mizoram Accord, signed in 1986, brought to an end decades of insurgency and strife in that beautiful part of our country. Pursuant to this Accord, Statehood has been conferred on Mizoram and elections have been held. A new Government has taken office. The aspirations of the people of Arunachal Pradesh for a full-fledged State have been fulfilled by the enactment of parliamentary legislation to confer the Statehood on Arunachal Pradesh. The new State came into existence on February 20, 1987. A new chapter in the history of the people of Arunachal Pradesh has begun.

Government are committed to safeguarding the rights and interests of minorities. The solemn assurances contained in our Constitution regarding religious, cultural and linguistic matters have been and are being implemented in letter and spirit. Government have continued to carefully monitor the implementation of the 15-point programme formulated by Shrimati Indira Gandhi to ameliorate the condition of minorities.

In my Address on February 20, 1986 I had outlined the priority areas for 1986-87 and beyond. The main policy thrusts were:

- (i) Formulation of the revised 20-point programme;
- (ii) Formulation of the new education policy;
- (iii) Formulation of technology missions to improve the condition of the rural and urban poor;
- (iv) A new orientation to our agricultural policy and taking the green revolution to the Eastern Region;
- (v) A more effective strategy for family planning;
- (vi) Intensification of industrial growth;
- (vii) Promotion of exports and tourism;
- (viii) Reforms in the administrative systems; and
- (ix) Changes in electoral laws.

My Government have taken action in all these areas and positive results are beginning to flow.

The 20-point programme of 1986 has sharpened the focus on measures to eradicate poverty. The main features of the restructured programmes are:

- (i) Poverty alleviation programmes which aim at expansion of rural employment and improvement of productivity and production;
- (ii) Programmes for ensuring justice to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes;
- (iii) Reduction of income inequalities and removal of social and economic disparities;
- (iv) Strengthening of the movement to ensure equal status for women;
- (v) Creation of new opportunities for youth;
- (vi) Provision of safe drinking water for all villages;
- (vii) Protection of environment;
- (viii) Supply of energy for the villages; and
- (ix) Evolving a more responsive administration.

The new education policy has been formulated. It is an effective instrument in our fight against poverty. Its major aim is to reach out to the poor and the deprived and to place in their hands the means to gain control over their own destiny. Programmes such as the Operation Blackboard, non-formal education, adult education, vocational education and Navodaya Vidyalayas will bring about qualitative changes in education. They will directly help socially and economically backward sections of the community. The new policy will also strengthen national integration. We have emphasized the importance of spreading an awareness and involvement of all our people in the heritage of India. The newly established zonal cultural centres have begun undertaking this task with enthusiasm and have organised innovative Festivals of our culture in Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram and *Apna Utsav* in the capital.

Five technology missions have been set up in the following areas:

- (i) Drinking water for all villages;
- (ii) Eradication of illiteracy;
- (iii) Universal immunisation of children;
- (iv) Production of oilseeds and manufacture of edible oils;
- (v) Improved communications.

Government are considering issues relating to an effective management and monitoring system for the missions. The key idea here is to involve the people in activities relating to the missions so that they realise the potential for individual and social development.

The reorientation of agricultural policy has proceeded satisfactorily. Growth of productivity in the eastern region has vindicated Government strategy. To increase and stabilise production and productivity in the major part of our land resources, a national programme of rainfed agriculture through watershed development has been launched during the current year in 16 major rainfed/dryland farming States. A National Pulses Development Project, with an outlay of Rs. 50 crores, has been started in 1986-87 to increase production of this essential protein crop.

We have formulated a new family planning strategy with major emphasis on voluntary acceptance of the two child norm. The programme will be integrated with health care, nutrition and education programmes. Government have decided that the leading role in promotion of the family welfare programme should be played by voluntary agencies.

In the sphere of industry, the dynamic thrust for efficiency and modernisation has begun to show results. Industrial production has picked up significantly.

Intensive efforts have been made on the basis of a coordinated approach to promote exports of both primary commodities and manufactured products. In our strategy manufacturing has been assigned the role of growth sector. A concessional rate of duty has been allowed on imports of modern capital goods for export production. Contemporary technology is being permitted for the thrust sectors. Significant fiscal and financial measures such as the new cash compensatory scheme, the duty drawback system, availability of MODVAT in respect of 38 specified chapters, deduction in respect of profits for exports, sharp reduction in the rates of interest on pre-shipment and post-shipment credit for exports and the new computer software policy are intended to boost exports.

The process of reform in our administrative system has gathered momentum. There has been a positive response of the civil servants to the new imperatives of accountability, social responsibility and a new work ethic. Government are determined to carry forward the task of bringing about qualitative improvements in Government management with the cooperation of all sections of the work force.

The basic structure of our electoral system has stood the test of time. It has ensured free and fair elections to Parliament and State legislatures and has been recognised and acclaimed as such by the whole world. Based on the report of the Chief Election Commissioner of 1986, Government have formulated certain suggestions, which are to be discussed with the various political parties and also thrown open to public debate. Necessary legislation will be initiated, as in the past, on the basis of consensus evolving from such discussions.

1986 will be remembered for significant legislation affecting important areas of national life. Stringent and comprehensive environment protection legislation has been enacted. It was brought into force on November 19, 1986 as a fitting tribute to the memory of Shrimati Indira Gandhi who did more than anyone else to raise environmental consciousness.

The rights of the consumers are now part of the statute book.

Radical laws have been passed to improve the status of women.

The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956 was amended to protect all persons sexually exploited for commercial purposes. Stricter punishment has been prescribed for living on the earnings of prostitution of children and minors.

The Dowry Prohibition Act was amended, shifting the burden of proving that there was no demand for dowry on the person who takes or abets the taking of dowry. Offences under the Act have been made non-bailable.

Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act has been passed under which depiction of figure of a woman, her form or body, which has the effect of being indecent, derogatory or which denigrates a woman, has been made punishable.

A significant feature of these laws is that legal remedy can be invoked by citizens. In implementing these far-reaching laws, the cooperation of public spirited and socially conscious citizens is of vital importance.

Let me now turn to the major trends in the economy. Notwithstanding an indifferent monsoon the growth in gross national product in 1986-87 will be around 5%. Thus the targeted growth rate of the Seventh Plan will be achieved for the second year in succession.

The foodgrain output will be somewhat higher than last year inspite of inadequate rains for the third year in succession. Government are concerned over the fact that even though agricultural production has reached higher levels, it is showing signs of levelling off. It is partly the

result of three consecutive years of poor precipitation. The basic strategy for increasing agricultural production is sound. Vigorous implementation of projects and programmes for increasing irrigation potential and popularising the use of high-yielding varieties of seeds is expected to achieve the targeted growth rates of the Seventh Plan. Government have taken major policy initiatives to increase the domestic production of oilseeds.

The industrial infrastructure has performed remarkably well both in 1985-86 and 1986-87. The average annual growth rates for the last two years are likely to be 9.5% in power, 6% in coal, 7.7% in saleable steel, 6.8% in hot metal, 8% in railway freight and 16.5% in fertilizers. The significant aspect of the infrastructural scene is that annual performance has continuously improved extending over every quarter. In many cases, the lowest production in a quarter has been higher than the highest production recorded in any quarter of the preceding year. The infrastructure has begun to use investments in an efficient manner.

The revised index of industrial production (base 1980-81=100), with a wider and more representative coverage than the old index, provides evidence of satisfactory industrial growth. In 1985-86 industrial production grew at the rate of 8.7%. In 1986-87 growth rate is expected to be 7.8%. There has been impressive growth in electronics during the previous two years at the rate of around 40 per cent per annum. The public sector has continued to play the key role in our economic development. At the end of 1985-86, the total investment in Central public enterprises stood at Rs. 50,341 crores, registering an increase of Rs. 14,947 crores compared with 1984-85. The financial performance of Central public enterprises has shown an encouraging trend. Measures have been taken to strengthen the autonomy of public enterprises and to make them accountable for results.

Public stocks of foodgrains have continued at high levels and stood at 23 million tonnes in December, 1986. This has enabled Government to make additional allocations of rice and wheat to States for public distribution, to provide rice and wheat at concessional rates to integrated tribal development projects and nutrition programmes and to make higher allocations for the National Rural Employment Programme and the Rural Labour Employment Guarantee Programme. Comfortable stocks of foodgrains also enabled Government to give adequate quantities to drought-stricken States for the the food-for-work programme.



There has been a major reorientation of policy to stimulate sugarcane and sugar production. The new two-year sugar policy aims at providing sugarcane farmers with more remunerative prices. It has also created a stable environment by announcement of the statutory minimum price a year in advance. As a result of this policy, sugar production increased by almost one million tonnes in 1985-86, and is expected to increase further in 1986-87. This has enabled Government to reduce sugar imports.

The technology mission for boosting oilseeds production has started functioning. A programme with an outlay of Rs. 170 crores during 1986-90 has been launched to increase production of oilseeds to 18 million tonnes in 1989-90. In *Kharif* 1986, productivity of oilseeds is estimated to have gone up by 10% and production by 7% over *Kharif* 1985, despite adverse weather conditions which reduced acreage by 3%. Edible oil imports were reduced to provide an incentive to domestic production. In 1985-86 imports were reduced by 55% in value terms and over 15% in quantity terms, Fiscal incentives have been provided to ensure processing of greater quantities of minor oilseeds and rice bran into edible oils.

In 1986-87, anti-poverty programmes received stronger emphasis. The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and the Employment Programmes are the kingpin of the anti-poverty strategy. In 1986-87 an outlay of Rs. 543.83 crores was provided for the Integrated Rural Development Programme. This may be compared with Rs. 207.7 crores provided in 1984-85 and Rs. 205.9 crores in 1985-86. Upto the end of December 1986, 2.07 million families have been assisted. New features have been introduced in the implementation of the programme. They are higher level of investment per family, provision for forward and backward linkages, emphasis on training of beneficiaries, involvement of voluntary organisations, introduction of concurrent evaluation and increasing the assistance to women. Under all these programmes the basic thrust is to provide maximum assistance to the poorest of the poor and to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

The National Rural Employment Programme and the Rural Landless Employment Programme were strengthened in 1986-87. Employment aggregating to 550 million mandays is expected to be created. There has been a noteworthy step up in outlays on NREP. In 1986-87 a total outlay of Rs. 479.75 crores was provided by the Centre compared with Rs. 230 crores for 1984-85 and Rs. 337.21 crores for

1985-86. Under RLEGP, which is wholly funded by the Centre, an outlay of Rs. 731.10 crores was provided for 1986-87 which may be compared with Rs. 400 crores for 1984-85 and Rs. 606.33 crores for 1985-86.

The 20-point programme of 1986 emphasises the provision of safe drinking water for all villages. In 1986-87, a total amount of Rs. 794.05 crores was allocated for the drinking water programme in Central and State plans taken together. 40,000 villages are expected to be covered exceeding the target of 35,930 villages. Special attention is being paid to provision of water supply for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

In 1986-87, the outlay for the annual plan was stepped up substantially. For the first time in our planning history, 40% of the Five Year Plan was financed in real terms in the first two years of the plan period. In allocation of resources high priority was accorded to anti-poverty programmes and to strengthening the core sectors of the economy. A massive increase of 65% was made in the outlay for major anti-poverty programmes. The outlays for agriculture, rural development and irrigation were stepped up by nearly 30%. The plan provision for education was increased by 60%. The Central plan for 1986-87 envisaged an outlay of Rs. 22,300 crores, representing an increase of 20.5% over the last year's outlay. The actual outlay of the plan is likely to be higher at around Rs. 23,000 crores. Nothing could illustrate better the strong commitment of Government to the pivotal role of planning in India's development.

Government have taken steps to implement the basic proposals outlined in the long term fiscal policy. The tax structure is being reformed and simplified, strong emphasis has been laid on mobilising resources for development by better administration and enforcement to improve compliance; a stable fiscal environment is being created to stimulate savings and investment, and a more open approach has been adopted in regard to fiscal policy.

Central Government revenues which increased by 23% in 1985-86 have shown a further increase of over 17% in April-December, 1986. Personal income-tax collection recorded an impressive growth of 35% in 1985-86; they have grown by another 16% in April-December, 1986. The continued buoyancy of Central revenues has vindicated Government's fundamental approach of reasonable tax rates combined with strict enforcement of tax laws.

A Cabinet Committee on Exports was set up to expedite decision making on policies and programmes for promotion of exports.

Exports grew by 17.3% in April-November, 1986 over the corresponding period of last year. Imports increased by only 1.4% over the same period. As a result the trade deficit has shown a substantial decline. We cannot, however, afford to be complacent. The challenge of self-reliance and of building a fully independent economy demands unremitting effort.

In the current year we crossed the one million mark in foreign tourist arrivals. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism are estimated at Rs. 1600 crores as compared to Rs. 1300 crores during 1985-86. Domestic tourism is being given special importance to promote national integration. Central Government is providing assistance for wayside facilities, wildlife sanctuaries, sound and light shows, and cheaper tourist accommodation.

While impressive results have been achieved in the matter of resource mobilisation, a similar effort has to be directed to controlling expenditure. The imperatives of growth with social justice compel serious attention to the task of containing unproductive expenditure. The consumer price index give cause for concern. However, inflation, as measured by the wholesale price index has been kept within reasonable limit. Government will continue to pursue policies to counteract inflationary trends in our economy.

During the last two years, a positive trend of improvement was seen in industrial relations. Strikes and lockouts declined from 2094 in 1984 to 1716 in 1985 and 1234 in 1986 (January to October). The loss of mandays due to industrial disputes fell from 56.03 million mandays in 1984 to 29.37 million mandays in 1985 and 19.41 million mandays during 1986 (January to October). Government have taken a number of steps to ensure that unorganised workers receive entitled benefits. Industrial workers have made a notable contribution to raising production and productivity in the last two years. Government are committed to safeguarding their interest and to enlist their cooperation for accelerated industrial growth.

Government have continued to pursue our non-aligned foreign policy objectives of peace, disarmament, development and cooperation with all nations for building an equitable world order.

The Six Nation Five Continent initiative in which Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania are taking part, has produced a favourable impact on public opinion throughout the world for intensive and sustained effort to bring about nuclear disarmament. At Reykjavik radical proposals for ending the nuclear

arms race were placed on the table. It is unfortunate that no agreement was reached. We have continued to urge both the USA and the USSR to preserve in their efforts to fulfil the aspirations of humankind for peace and for a world free from nuclear weapons.

At the Non-aligned Summit at Harare, India handed over the chairmanship of the movement to Zimbabwe. The Summit acclaimed the role our country has played in strengthening non-alignment and in reaffirming the basic objectives of the Movement. The Summit entrusted to our Prime Minister the chairmanship of the newly established AFRICA Fund Committee to carry forward the struggle against apartheid and to support the efforts of the Frontline States. The AFRICA Fund Summit held in Delhi on January 24-25, 1987 has given concrete shape to the concept articulated at Harare. Government are convinced that comprehensive mandatory sanctions alone will compel the racist regime in South Africa to forestall bloodshed and listen to the voice of reason. Governments that are in a position to influence South Africa, because of their commercial and economic relations, have to mount pressure through comprehensive mandatory sanctions.

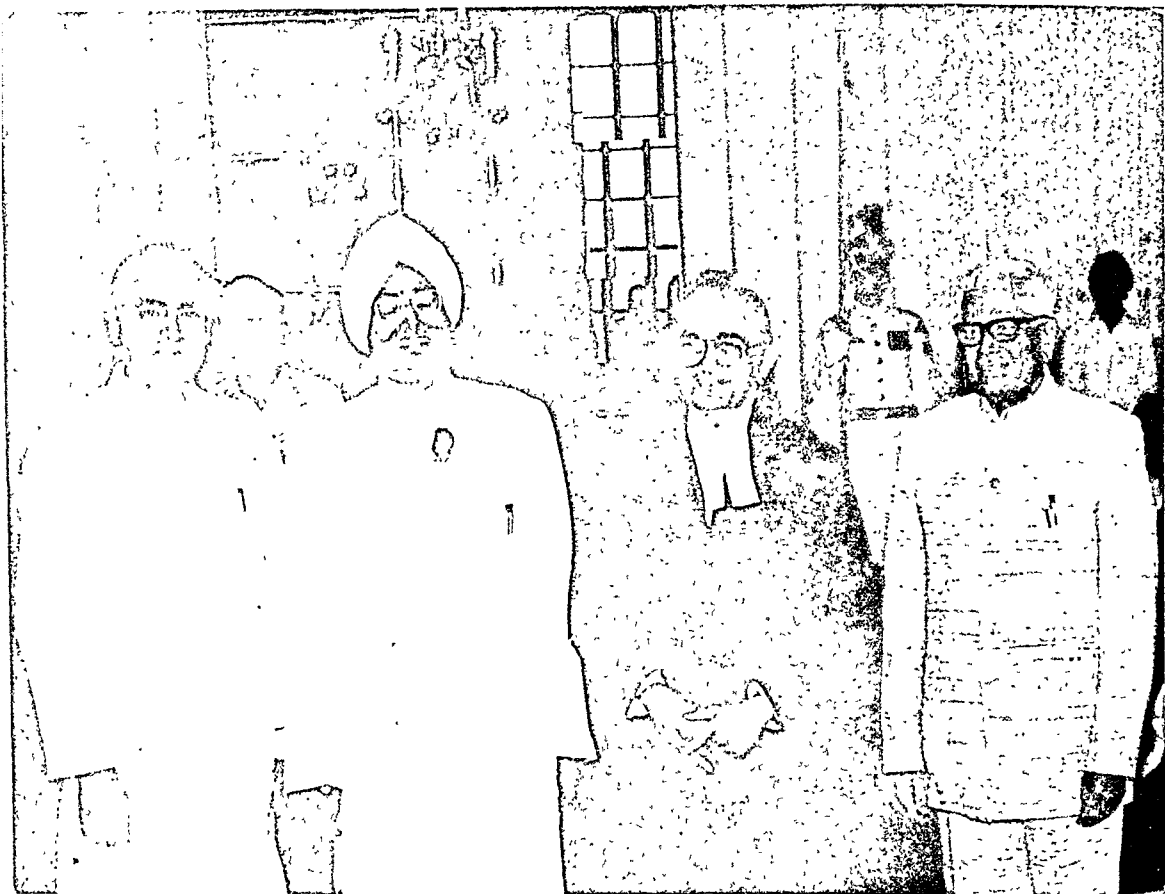
India's policy of expanding cooperation in our region has achieved significant results. The successful SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Summit held in Bangalore in November, 1986 under India's chairmanship has demonstrated the benefits of regional cooperation. A permanent Secretariat of SAARC has since been established in Kathmandu. New areas including control of drug trafficking, children's welfare, broadcasting, tourism and scholarships have been identified for the programme of SAARC cooperation. Our Prime Minister took the opportunity of SAARC meeting to hold useful bilateral discussions.

Despite the set-back caused by the deployment by Pakistan of its troops on our borders, efforts are continuing to create a basis for cooperation with Pakistan. The main hurdles in the way of normalisation are Pakistan's clandestine effort to acquire nuclear weapons capability, its arms programme with serious implications for our security environment and its support to anti-national and secessionist elements in Punjab.

It is unfortunate that the promise held out by our bilateral discussions with Sri Lanka at Bangalore and of subsequent high level consultations in December, 1986 has received a set-back. The negotiating process has been hindered by the hesitations of the



*Recording a message for telecast to the nation, New Delhi, January 24, 1986*



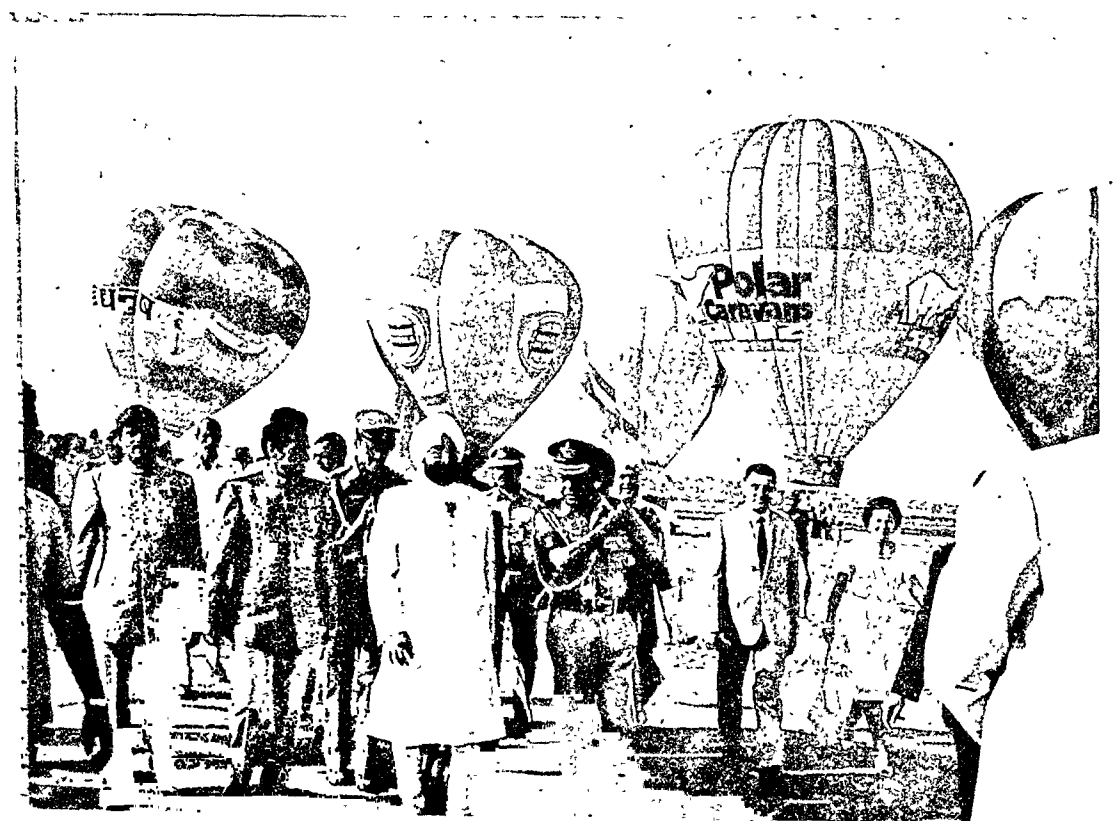
*At the swearing-in ceremony of Shri P.N. Bhagwati, Chief Justice of India, July 12, 1987*



*Arriving to address Joint session of Parliament, January 17, 1985*



*Celebrating birthday amid children, New Delhi, May 5, 1986*



*Inaugurating India International Balloon Mela, New Delhi, November 14, 1985*



*Paying homage to Netaji Subhash, Calcutta, January 23, 1987*





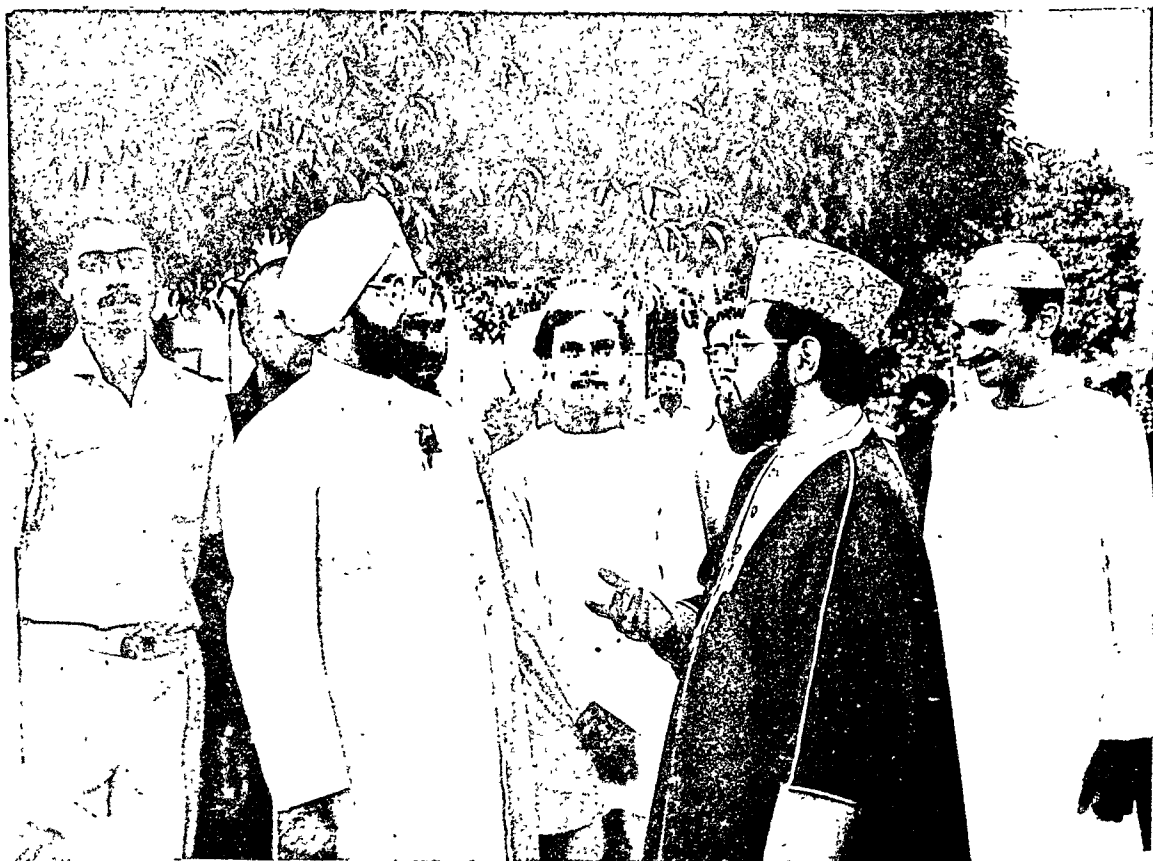
*With officers of National Defence College at Rashtrapati Bhavan, March 2, 1985*



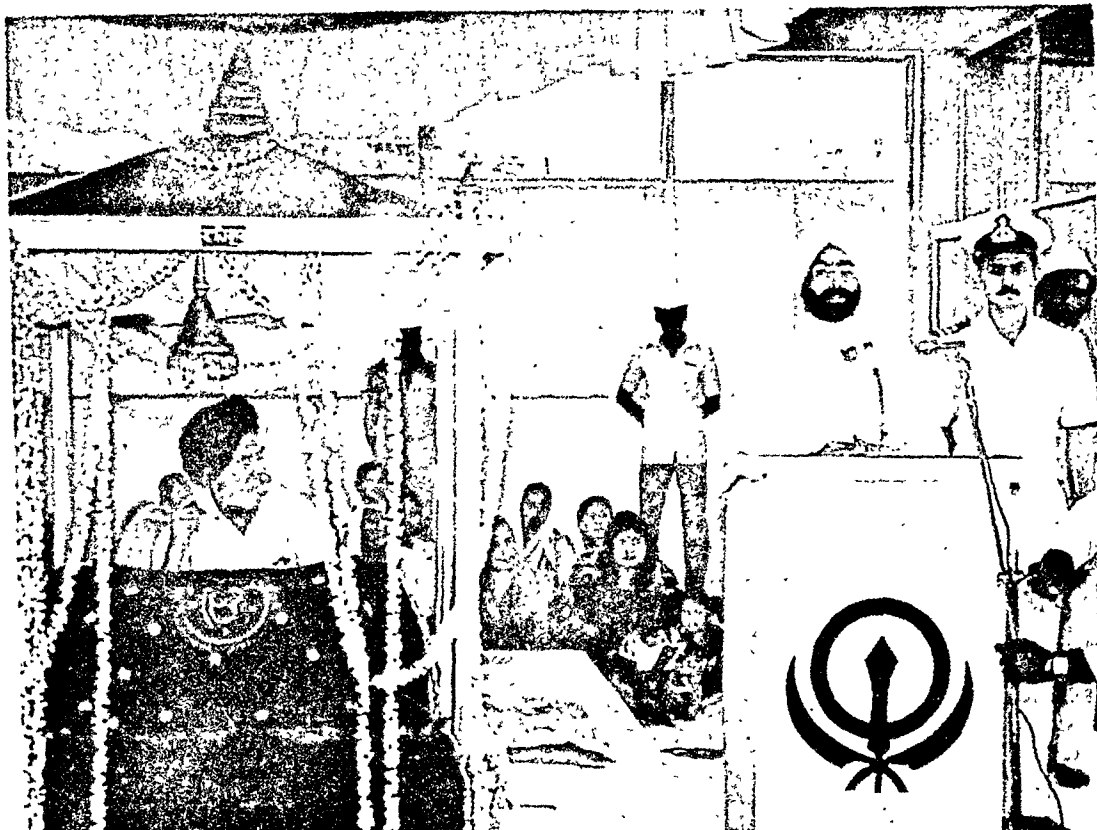
*In ONGC complex, Dehradun, June 11, 1985*



*Paid obeisance at  
Swaminarayan Temple  
Gandhinagar (Gujarat),  
December 13, 1985*



*Receiving Id greetings from Delhi Muslims, June 20, 1985*



*Visited Gurudwara at Vizag (A P.) July 18, 1985*



*With Pope John Paul-II, New Delhi, February 1, 1986*



*Laying the foundation stone of Sikkim Legislative Assembly building, Gangtok, November 30, 1985*



*In a civic reception, Imphal, October 5, 1985*

Government of Sri Lanka in regard to their own formula of December 19, 1986. The massive military operations undertaken by the Sri Lanka security forces and the economic blockade of Jaffna area have created further complications. We are deeply affected by the hardship, suffering and loss of life of the Tamil civilian population of Sri Lanka. The ethnic issue in Sri Lanka can only be resolved through political dialogue.

My Government continues to strive for a just and peaceful settlement of the border question with China. The question remains crucial to full normalisation of our relations. The unfortunate development on the border continues to cause concern. Our position on the border question is well known. We are in discussion with China on the issue.

We uphold the unalienable rights of the Palestinian people. We support the liberation struggle of the peoples of Southern Africa. We have repeatedly urged an early end to the fratricidal war between Iraq and Iran. We continue to support the efforts of the Contadora group to achieve a peaceful and lasting settlement of the crisis in Central America. We have also supported the UN Secretary General's initiative on Afghanistan. We welcome the flexible responses to the outstanding issues in regard to Afghanistan and trust that conditions will be created soon to ensure the status of Afghanistan as an independent, non-aligned country free from outside interference and intervention.

During the last year, I paid goodwill visits to Nepal, Greece, Poland and Yugoslavia. The Vice-President visited France and Botswana. The Prime Minister paid bilateral visits to the Maldives, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Tanzania, Mauritius, Mexico, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and Thailand. The Prime Minister also participated in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Review Meeting in London, the Summit Meeting of the Six Nation Five Continent Peace Initiative at Ixtapa and the Eighth Non-aligned Summit in Harare, besides visiting Sweden to attend the funeral of late Prime Minister Olof Palme.

We had the privilege to host the Prime Minister of Greece, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, the Prime Minister of Turkey, the President of Seychelles, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, the President of the African National Congress, the President of SWAPO, the President of Bangladesh, the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, the President of Nicaragua, the Prime Minister of

Zambia, the King of Jordan, the Prime Minister of Denmark, the President of Peru, the Prime Minister of Malaysia and the President of Finland. The then Prime Minister and the current President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Prime Minister of Italy made transit visits to India. President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan paid an unofficial visit.

These bilateral visits have strengthened our friendly relations with these countries. A large number of agreements have been signed to further bilateral cooperation in economic, commercial, scientific and cultural fields.

In the context of the close and friendly relations that have characterised the four decade history of Indo-Soviet cooperation, the visit of Mr. Gorbachev, the General Secretary of CPSU, was a landmark. The Delhi Declaration signed by Mr. Gorbachev and our Prime Minister has provided a qualitatively new framework for international relations based on non-violence, justice and equality. It will have worldwide significance in establishing new attitudes and values relevant to the crucial problems of humanity.

The thrust of Government policy is to improve the welfare of economically and socially weaker sections of the community. The primary focus of policies and programmes initiated during the last two years has been to assist the landless agricultural labour, the small and marginal farmers, artisans and craftsmen, handloom weavers, women, children, the urban poor, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes. Our strategy of development will continue to strongly emphasize social justice as its foremost objective.

In spite of the many difficult problems we are facing, the people have high confidence in their capacity to build a strong and prosperous India. This confidence comes from our impressive achievements. India stands as a symbol of stability and progress. Our commitment to basic values and our determination to preserve our cultural heritage have enabled us to march forward with our head held high. We still have much to do. With the cooperation and unbounded enthusiasm of our people, my Government will take the country forward on its chosen path.

Our tasks are anchored to basic national priorities. National cohesion will be strengthened. Communalism will be fought tooth and nail. The anti-poverty programme will be implemented with vigour. The core sectors of our economy will be strengthened and expanded to ensure self-reliant growth. The energy and vitality of our youth will be

harnessed to nation building. The spirit of sacrifice which permeated the struggle for freedom must be recaptured to face the challenges that confront us. A passion for nation building must fill our hearts. For the accomplishment of these momentous tasks, I give you my good wishes.

## Ensure Speedy Justice

**I**AM VERY glad to be here today and to associate myself with the Post-centenary Silver Jubilee Function of Calcutta High Court. It is the oldest High Court of our country, having been set up formally on this day in the year 1862, it came to occupy its own building which was completed in May, 1872.

After Independence, the name of the High Court of Judicature, functioning at Fort William, was renamed as Calcutta High Court. This High Court has a long and eventful history. The decisions taken at this Court have always served as guidelines for other courts of our country.

The first Indian Chief Justice of this court was Shri Phani Bhushan Chakraborty who presided over this court from 1952 to 1956. On assumption of his office he said, "It is a great mistake, you suppose as it is some time done that with the establishment of the Republic and the Constitution of India, courts of law have lost a part of their own importance and that courts are required only at places where some outside intervention between autocratic authority and the individual is required. In my view the importance of courts is even greater under a democratic constitution like ours, where the courts have been given the function of saying what the constitution is, of seeing that none of the various bodies, including the legislatures, exceeds the limits of its powers; and of seeing further that no man is denied justice and from no place the rule of law withdrawn".

In our Constitution, provisions have been made to grant fundamental rights to every citizen of our country, the aim of which is to give protection against discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, creed, sex and place of birth. Our Constitution also provides that no law will be enacted to curtail or to infringe our fundamental rights.

The Preamble of our Constitution says that it will secure to all its citizens, justice, social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship and equality of status and



opportunity. "Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation, we the people of India hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution" declares the preamble of our Constitution.

Cases relating to fundamental rights can be taken up by the courts but the Directive Principles of State Policy, which are yet to be implemented fully are outside their purview. For instance, Directive Principles of State Policy ensure to all citizens employment opportunities, to lead a dignified life. But there are millions of people leading a miserable life below the poverty line and are unable to get daily necessities of life.

It has also been assured that there will be no discrimination in employment between males and females and that children will not be misused and exploited by forcing them to join jobs which are harmful to their health.

These principles also provide that efforts will be made to bring a common civil code for all the citizens of our country and that within a time frame of ten years from the date of adoption of our Constitution, arrangements will be made for free and compulsory education for all the children till they attain the age of 14 years.

Although these are very essential rights granted in the Constitution yet the citizens are helpless as these cannot be enforced through the courts. All of you have to consider it seriously and to find out ways to bring these within the purview of the courts.

Executive, legislatures and judiciary are the three important elements of Democracy. In case anyone of these three factors become weak, the morale comes down, making the foundations of the structure of Government weak and shaky.

For the stability of democracy, independence of judiciary is as essential as the lungs for our body. Legislature works as our mind, executive works as our arms and judiciary works like lungs which bring fresh air inside our body to keep it alive, and to provide it vigour and strength.

In our democratic system, a citizen goes to the court to seek justice after exhausting all other avenues. The Judiciary should render justice to everyone without fear and favour and protect against atrocities, cruelty and injustice. Judiciary's selfless devotion to its work can be called "Ram Rajya".

Calcutta High Court has a very laudable record. This Court heard innumerable cases but out of those now, I remember, one particular

revolutionary event related to our struggle for freedom. In 1935 Baba Gurdit Singh of Kama Gata Maru filed a defamation case at Calcutta High Court against a British-owned newspaper which had brought dishonour by publishing an article in connection with the Kama Gata Maru Ship and the Gadar Party. In that case on behalf of the appellant-advocate Sudir Ray alongwith his colleagues S/Shri Suhrawardhy, S.C. Millar and S. Chatterjee appeared in the Court.

In his judgement, Justice Contiff of Calcutta High Court ordered that a compensation of Rs. 2,000/- excluding the cost of the case, be paid to Baba Gurdit Singh. This speaks volumes for the fearlessness of the Calcutta High Court even under colonial rule which maintained highest tradition of justice.

I am sure that this High Court will continue to follow its traditions and strengthen further our democratic system by ensuring justice to the citizens.

I would like to mention here that the people of our country are very poor and more than 60 percent of them are illiterate. I am told that there are lakhs of cases unattended in the courts waiting for decisions. Delay in justice is denial of justice which causes hardship to people. Acceleration in the procedure of granting justice is very necessary.

Before concluding, I would like to tell my friends, advocates, that they should not make use of their profession to earn more and more wealth but to render service to the people in need and devote themselves to secure justice for them speedily and cheaply. The advocates must consider it as their moral duty to show sympathy towards their clients who come to seek justice, just like the doctors who have a moral duty to the ailing patients.

I congratulate all the justices, officers, and members of the staff of Calcutta High Court on this occasion and wish them all success and prosperity in future.

## Courage and Confidence

I AM HAVING the privilege of greeting and addressing you on the eve of my laying down the office of President tomorrow, which I have occupied for the last five years. It has been a rare honour you and your elected representatives conferred on a humble son of the soil like me. As the first citizen and servant of the nation, my foremost duty has been to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law and to devote myself to the service and well being of the people of India. Though I have done my utmost to discharge these functions to the best of my ability, yet if I have ever been found wanting in any manner, I can crave only your indulgence. The love and affection showered on me by all of you will sustain me upto the end of my days and will remain my most cherished treasure.

During my tenure, I tried to meet as many of you as possible in your own States and homesteads. In view of the vastness of our land and various other factors, it has not been possible for me to visit each and every town, though I really wish I could do so. I have always yearned for your prosperity and welfare, especially of those who are still suffering from disabilities and inequities and are struggling to attain a reasonable standard of living. I share my deep sympathy with those who are still victims of narrow prejudices and discriminations and are trying to achieve social status and self-respect.

As an ancient nation, we have every reason to be proud of our rich cultural heritage. It is a land of prophets, rishis, munis, gurus, saints, seers and scholars. There is, perhaps, no other country with such a diversity of languages, faiths, creeds and customs. By forging bonds of unity, we could attain great strength and become a mighty force.

In a democratic system, sovereignty rests with the people. They hand a mandate to the representatives elected by them. Individuals are important, but more important are the basic values and principles of democratic system. Since independence, our people have shown remarkable intelligence and maturity in exercising their democratic rights. I have abiding faith in their discerning power and their judgement.

Our national leaders had a vision and a dream for the country. They wanted to build a strong, united and prosperous India with respect and dignity in the world. It is for us to realize that dream with honesty of purpose and integrity of character. We have to place the nation above groups and parties. We have to remember that there are no higher virtues than tolerance and respect for one another and no greater sins than communal discord and hatred. And also there is no substitute for honesty and hard work. To make India great, we shall have to work with sincerity, courage and confidence.

We won freedom at the end of a long struggle. We got a chance to lead an independent national life. We set an example to scores of subjugated nations of Asia and Africa, who, one after another cast away colonial yoke and became members of the comity of free nations. As the biggest third world country, the eyes of the world are upon us. We must continue our resolve to be a citadel of peace, freedom and democracy.

I would like to say a word of appreciation and admiration for the high morale and efficiency of our defence services. They have always displayed a deep sense of devotion and dedication to defend the country against any external danger and to keep our borders inviolable. I extend my best wishes to all officers and men for their welfare.

To conclude I would like to thank all of you once again, my countrymen, for the honour you gave me and the consideration and affection with which you treated me. I do not have enough words to express my gratitude to you.

My services as a humble citizen will always be available to the nation. I do hope that all of us will continue to work to strengthen the fabric of a democratic and secular India and take it to greater heights.

# **Science and Technology**

# Traditional Medicine System

I AM VERY happy to be amongst you today on the occasion of the First Asian Congress of Pharmacology being held in New Delhi. We are glad that India has been chosen as the host country for the First Asian Congress and I welcome all the delegates particularly our foreign guests who are assembled here. I hope that during your stay you would find time to learn a little about our culture, our arts as well as the scientific and other developments that have taken place during the last three decades.

Modern drugs have contributed extensively to the treatment of disease and alleviation of human suffering. Many of the killer diseases have been controlled and the average life span has increased in both developing and developed countries. This impact has been particularly noticeable in the developing countries as infectious diseases which contributed largely to mortality in these countries have been effectively controlled by the anti-infective drugs. Pharmacologists have played an important role in the development of new drugs and mankind owes a debt to your profession and allied professions for the good health that it enjoys.

While modern drugs have been undoubtedly a blessing, their indiscriminate use has brought problems in its wake. The wide spread use of antibiotics for the treatment of even minor diseases is resulting in the emergence of resistant organisms which are susceptible only to newer antibiotics which are very expensive and not always available in developing countries. While medical experts have been cautioning on the need for rational and discriminate use of drugs, the indiscriminate and unnecessary use of drugs continues. It is not surprising therefore that while the consumption of medicines continues to rise in the cities and urban areas, the consumption in the rural areas where the bulk of the country's population lives has shown no appreciable increase. It is necessary to remedy this situation because in my view the people living in urban areas are given drugs which they do not always need while the poor in the rural areas do not get drugs which they really need. It is

necessary for the professional people in developing countries to develop strategies that are more in keeping with conditions prevailing in these countries. I am therefore happy to note that the theme of the Congress is "Pharmacology for Health in Asia" and I hope that your discussions would centre upon the health problems in developing countries and what your profession can do in resolving these problems.

While the people in many of the developing countries suffer from tropical diseases, the research products for the treatment of these diseases have so far primarily emanated from the developed countries. It would not be desirable for developing countries to depend solely upon the developed countries for research in medicines for tropical diseases. There are already signs that research laboratories in developed countries are giving a low priority to research in tropical medicines and it is therefore up to scientists in the developing countries to intensify their efforts in this direction.

The development of a new anti-malarial drug from plant sources in the People's Republic of China which is gaining wide acceptance is proof that if research scientists in the developing world resolve to work in this area the results will be forthcoming.

One feature which is common to the countries in Asia is the Traditional System of medicine which has been practised in our countries for centuries. These systems of medicine which served our forefathers well, went into decline during the period of colonial rule. However, there is now a greater realisation that these medicines which are non-toxic, safe for use, have an important role to play particularly in primary health care. In India these medicines are being used along with allopathic medicines by the community health guides, multipurpose workers and in the primary health centres. Many allopathic doctors do prescribe *ayurvedic* medicines particularly in the treatment of chronic diseases where allopathic medicines provide only symptomatic relief and have adverse side effects. While traditional medicines should be given the importance they deserve, it is necessary that they should be studied scientifically to confirm some of the therapeutic claims made for these medicines and to reject those claims that cannot be scientifically supported. The pharmacologists have an important role to play in this area. As scientific studies are time consuming and also expensive, the possibility of inter-country cooperation should be explored. Many of the traditional medicines used in the countries of this Sub-continent are common and the results

of scientific studies on these medicines would be useful to all these countries.

Population control is a priority area for many countries in Asia. The conventional methods of family planning require to be improved upon. While the oral contraceptives are the most extensively used mode of contraceptives, the side effects that are now being reported are discouraging their use. The traditional medicines of herbal origin could prove very useful in this area. If the countries in Asia could pool their scientific resources and concentrate their energies in the development of a contraceptive which is suitable for the needs of the population it may be possible to make a breakthrough which would benefit not only the countries of this region but the whole world.

Although through centuries Asian countries have been bound to each other through traditions and customs I feel that there is not sufficient exchange of information between countries in Asia. This is particularly true of scientific research where the tendency is to look to the countries of the West. The health problems of the developing countries have to be tackled by the developing countries themselves. A considerable amount of useful information is probably available among the developing countries and if this information could be exchanged and advantage taken of the experience then all of us would benefit. I hope your Conference would devote some attention to this important aspect.

I take great pleasure in inaugurating the First Asian Congress of Pharmacology being held in New Delhi.



## Control of Blindness

I AM GLAD to be here today and to associate myself with the inauguration of this Conference.

Ancient India had developed ophthalmic services as a speciality and the names of some of the stalwarts like Charaka and Sushruta are common household names. Their works are enshrined in Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. It was on record to show that there was both medical and surgical treatment of the eye diseases in ancient times. It gives me added pleasure to inaugurate this Congress which is held here for the first time.

The ophthalmic problems in the Asia Pacific region, particularly in the developing nations of the region, are a cause of concern for all the people and their Governments. These problems in some countries have assumed almost epidemic proportions and have a crippling effect on their economy. In view of this I am happy to note that the countries of this region joined together to discuss these problems and formed an Academy in 1958, to promote exchange of information on ocular health and seek solution to these problems through preventive, curative and rehabilitative measures. It is also of great interest to me to note that the academy promotes research activities and the collaboration amongst the participating countries. It is in the fitness of things that in all its Congresses held so far the Academy has assigned a special session to discuss the problems of prevention of visual impairment and control of blindness through a community approach. This will enable the delegates to learn from each other and modify their approach in solving their national problems. One common thing in the region is the lack of well structured ophthalmic services from the periphery to the apex. I know that there are many constraints, especially financial resources. Ophthalmic services are no exception as the same state of affairs exists in other medical fields.

In India we have been trying to assess the magnitude of the problem of visual impairment and control of blindness. In 1971-1973 a rough estimate of the magnitude of the problems was made in India,

according to which 1.4% of the population (i.e. about 9 millions) were blind due to varied causes. Cataract, ocular infections including trachoma and nutritional deficiencies constitutes the bulk of avoidable blindness. It was pointed out that about 45 millions suffered from ocular morbidity, most of which was avoidable. A national programme on control of trachoma and ocular infections was in operation for over a decade. Since then small-pox has been controlled and one of the important causes of blindness due to ocular infections was contained. Realising the magnitude of the problem and the financial burden, the Government of India formulated and launched a comprehensive programme for the prevention of visual impairment and control of blindness in 1976. Since then the programme has become an important segment in the health sector. It is heartening to note that the problem continues to command the same urgency and attention. I hope that the targets will be achieved to lower the prevalence rate of blindness from the present 1.4% of the population to 0.5% by the turn of the century.

I would like to draw your attention to some aspects of the problems which can be solved with a minimum of resources, the most important of which is the nutritional blindness. I am told that there are 14,000 children at any given point of time suffering from nutritional vitamin A deficiency while we have plenty of natural vitamin food supplies. All that is needed is dissemination of information regarding these food stuffs and the benefits of their use. Leafy green vegetables, carrots, tomatoes, papaya and other fruits, milk and milk products are easily available which can be utilised to overcome this deficiency.

There is the problem of corneal blindness. Sight can be restored to most of them through corneal grafting operation, but donor eyes are not available. It is said that social prejudices and religious taboos are standing in the way of getting donor eyes from the dead. We must jointly fight against these social evils, educate the masses and seek their active voluntary cooperation.

Yet another important problem is the restoration of sight to the patients suffering from cataract. A simple operation consuming only a few minutes of your expertise can make all the difference to the life of these unfortunate brethren and a welcome change to their life patterns. I would appeal to ophthalmic surgeons to render selfless service for the restoration of sight for these needy ones and help them from the state of helplessness. I hope that your Congress will deliberate on this issue, which is not peculiar to India alone.

In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to the strategy evolved by the Indian plan of action which, I am told, is regarded as a model plan of action for a global strategy to prevent blinding diseases, promote eye health education and timely curative action, restore sight wherever it can be restored and build up structural services to institute early treatment and avoid accumulation of the incoming cases. If all of you dedicate yourselves to the success of this strategy. I am confident that this problem can be tackled.

I am given to understand that during the last two and a half decades, your Academy has made significant progress in bringing together research worker, scientist and practising ophthalmologist closer to each other. This goes a long way in providing better service to the people. I can say with a sense of pride and happiness that we in India are willing to build common bridges in the cause of the service of the poor in all parts of the World.

I congratulate the recipients of the various awards and commend their services to the community.

May, I, in the end request you all to foster exchange of ideas, personnel know-how and technology for the benefit of the common man. I thank the Asia Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology for inviting me to inaugurate this Congress. I wish your deliberations all success.

## A Challenging Task

I AM VERY happy to be here with you today on this occasion, in this beautiful campus in a scholarly environment. This occasion has also helped me to understand the valuable work which this prestigious institution is doing in several fields of science and technology.

Soon after independence, a sound decision was taken to set up the five IITs as premier National Centres of study in order to create facilities for higher technological education in this country. I have had the pleasure of visiting IITs at Delhi, Madras and Bombay. IIT Kanpur which is now celebrating its Silver Jubilee, provides facilities in engineering, technology and applied sciences at Undergraduate and postgraduate levels and for research work extensively. I am glad to note that it has carved out for itself a place of special importance. I am sure that the Institute will rededicate itself to face the various challenges in the fast advancing technological field.

India has a long distinguished tradition in education. It is, therefore, only just that our educational institutions should be the torch-bearers of the change for the better in the life of the people and the country. While institutions, such as yours have been established to keep abreast of global advances in science and technology, it is only fair that the country looks forward to the institutions like yours to not only create knowledge as is already there but to apply it appropriately for national needs. In this vast country of ours perhaps the social imperatives dictate to an extent the need for co-existence over a short span of time of the advanced and not-so-advanced but it is necessary that the gap between the two should be reduced speedily by appropriate technological tools so that any social discontent or disturbance does not upset the life style and living environment to a point of no return. I am a strong supporter of indigenous technology and I would like to mention here that self-reliance is inescapable and must be at the very heart of technological development in this country. We must aim at major technology break-through in the shortest possible time for the development of indigenous technology to be able to serve national

better placed than most others to set an example to the nation in increasing productivity at all levels.

On this special occasion when you are completing one era of memorable development and passing on to the next, I can only hope that you might better your own achievements in the coming years by contributing largely and in a satisfactory manner to the country's development in general and of professional education in particular.

You have my best wishes in your noble endeavours.

## Absorbing New Technologies

I AM GLAD to be here amongst you today and to distribute the awards to the outstanding small scale entrepreneurs. I am pleased to note that out of the total 18 award winners 9 are from the backward areas. It is especially heartening to note that out of the three national awards the first and second awards have gone to the entrepreneurs in backward areas.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the award winners for their entrepreneurial skills and particularly the two lady entrepreneurs who have proved their abilities by setting and running their units successfully. While distributing the awards last year I had mentioned that a lot more needs to be done for upgradation of technology. The Seventh Five Year Plan has placed considerable emphasis on the upgradation of technology and modernisation. I am sure that the small scale entrepreneurs will take advantage of the facilities to improve their technology and to modernise their enterprise.

The Small Scale Sector contributes considerably to industrial production and employment and thus plays an important role in the development of our country. The main factor contributing to the growth of this sector has been the native entrepreneurship of individuals assisted by consultancy services of SISI (Small Industries Service Institution) and liberal financial assistance provided by public financial institutions of Central and State Governments. I am told that the Government have started a National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development in 1983 in order to give further impetus to entrepreneurial development.

I am glad that various programmes for development of entrepreneurship have been started to create opportunities for enterprising persons. It is encouraging to know that more and more emphasis is now being laid on product and process oriented entrepreneurial development training programmes. The owner manager in the small industries sector also needs training in various functional areas of management and it is heartening to know that

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Speech while giving away the awards to the outstanding small scale entrepreneurs, New Delhi, April 15, 1985

particular attention is being given to provide basic management training to the budding entrepreneurs. I am sure that this will enable them to face competition from medium and large scale sectors effectively and with confidence.

Our industrial sector as a whole is on the threshold of a major technological up-swing, especially in the new areas like electronics. I feel that the small scale sector should organise itself properly and prepare itself to absorb new technologies. There are millions of artisans in the country producing a variety of goods. It is necessary to enable them to improve their productivity through new technologies and make them competitive.

We should also keep in mind the fact that there are still many problems faced by the small industrialists. A number of steps are being taken in this direction which will go a long way in solving problems of the small entrepreneurs in the country. The achievement of the small scale industries in India is indeed a matter of great pride to all of us. Now, we are in a position to help the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America in the development of small scale industries.

Once again I congratulate the award winners for their performance and for having won these national awards.

## Science and Outlook

**I**T GIVES ME a great pleasure to be in this evergreen city of Guwahati, especially on an occasion like this. The natural abundance of Assam, its rich culture and warm hospitality of its people make me feel immensely happy to be here.

What has brought us here today is the Fifteenth National Science Exhibition for Children which is held every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Nothing was closer to Nehruji's heart than children and their well being. To him science and technology was a means to achieve the goals of self-reliance, economic independence and all round development of our children. The National Science Exhibition is a fitting tribute to Nehruji's living memory although none of today's children were born when Panditji left us.

The word 'science' has a very wide connotation. Science affects human affairs mainly in two ways. First, through its role in bringing about material prosperity. Second, by liberating the human mind from the bondages of obscurantism and superstition and by creating a scientific outlook or a scientific temper—as Panditji often called it. He said and I quote, "Science cannot accept the closing of the windows of the mind". It is this scientific outlook and the method of science that we need to promote through education and that will be the most befitting way of remembering Jawaharlal Nehru and what he stood for. He said, and I quote, "It is the scientific method alone that offers hope to mankind and an ending of the agency of the world. This world is rocked by fierce conflicts and they are analysed and called by many names. But, essentially, the major conflict is between the method of science and the methods opposed to science". There is an emerging contradiction today that seems to be threatening the very existence of our civilization. On the one hand, the external impact of scientific knowledge and the fruits of science are changing our lives beyond recognition, and the doubling period of scientific knowledge is shrinking at an astonishing speed. On the other, the renewed forces of

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Speech on the occasion of the Fifteenth National Science Exhibition for Children, Guwahati, November 17, 1986



parochialism, obscurantism and fanaticisms of various hues are threatening what India has always stood for—tolerance, open-mindedness, freedom from prejudice and hospitality to new ideas.

In a democracy, it is the citizens from all walks of life who make the public decisions. And it is true that as we proceed towards the next century, more and more of these decisions can be made intelligently only in the light of objective and scientific considerations which bear upon them. Hence the need for spreading the knowledge of science. But scientific and technological studies are not devoid of moral values. "Science is both knowledge and power. it is illuminating as well as fruitful". The free spirit of man, nurtured by the scientific method, cannot succumb to fanatic forces. This aspect of science—the development of the scientific mind—is what is more important than striving for the material aspect of science. While knowledge takes us ahead intellectually, "we should not only train the intellect but bring grace into the heart of man". A truly scientific temper is an essential ingredient for the cultivation of such a mind.

When I look at the bright eyes of yours, I cannot but believe that behind your innovative models and projects which reflect your knowledge of the principles of science, there is a growing mind on which will be founded the highest wisdom.

Visualizing a project is a creative exercise. Preparing an exhibit involves systematic thinking, capacity to work hard and a spirit of cooperation between members of the project team. The satisfaction of having completed a task successfully is an impetus for further creative thinking. It helps build self-confidence. These are the qualities that are to be developed among the youngsters who are tomorrow's leaders of the nation.

I understand that the general theme for this year's exhibition is "Science and the Home". Perhaps this means that you have aimed at developing innovative models and projects that show how scientific and technological devices make life at home a little more comfortable. If you try to understand scientific principles, behind practices which have evolved in our homes through generations, I am sure you would see that all that is "old" is not obsolete nor unscientific. Our scientific heritage is as old and as formidable as our cultural heritage. So do try to look at some of our age old practices; there is lot of gold in them. Rediscover it in the light of today's science with an open mind.

Much as it is a matter of joy for the participating students and their teachers who have come here from various parts of the country. The

exhibition is going to be visited by countless other visitors, young and old. The visitors common interest in the exhibition will remove the barrier between the young and the old and between those from villages and cities. It will enthuse many more children to toy with their ideas.

I congratulate the National Council of Educational Research and Training and the Government of Assam on their efforts to make this exhibition a success. NCERT has done a commendable job for the last so many years by promoting this movement all over the country.

With great pleasure, I inaugurate this exhibition.

## Strides in Drug Research

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today and to associate with the Ranbaxy Research Awards function. It is a very happy occasion as we are assembled here to honour our scientists who are engaged in basic research work to improve quality of life and relieve the sufferings of the ailing humanity. I congratulate Dr. P.K. Ray, Dr. T. Ramakrishnan, Dr. C.M. Gupta and Dr. R.S. Mani, the recipients of the Ranbaxy Research Awards. An eminent panel of Judges has assessed their research achievements as outstanding. I congratulate Bhai Mohan Singh, and the management of Ranbaxy Laboratories for instituting these Awards to mark their silver jubilee celebrations. Our Scientists need all encouragements in their efforts and Ranbaxy Laboratories deserve all appreciation for taking initiative in rewarding their efforts.

The Pharmaceutical Industry is amongst the most highly research-based industries. It is heartening to note that academic research efforts in the Universities and other Institutions supported by research-based Pharmaceutical Companies have led to major advances and development of new drugs for eradication and control of a number of diseases. I am told that during the last over 60 years, there has been a nine-fold increase in the discoveries of newer drugs for effective treatment. The great advances of the Pharmaceutical Industry in developed countries have been due to large inputs provided by the industry for Research and Development. I am told that they invest between 8 to 10 per cent of their turnover in R&D. The development of a new drug require funds on a massive scale over a long term period. In the field of Research and Development we should not lag behind and I am sure that our entrepreneurs will do their best in this field. Our requirements are governed by our conditions which are different from those of the Western World. We have to give priority to basic research. We need more and more for diseases peculiar to our region. It is known that a little over a billion people suffer from one or more of several tropical diseases which have been inflicting terrible sufferings and tragedies to the mankind. The tropical diseases are mostly due to

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Speech at Ranbaxy Research Awards Function, New Delhi, January 16, 1987

poor hygiene and sanitation, malnutrition and poverty. In the Preamble to WHO resolution on tropical diseases, the World Health Assembly noted that "tropical parasitic diseases are one of the main obstacle to improving the health and socio-economic development in countries of the tropical and sub-tropical zone". In reality, the situation represents a vicious circle just as much as diseases are the cause of under development, the latter is one of the major factors standing in the way of control and eradication of many of these diseases. The Government are giving due priority to improve the living conditions in the country. The responsibility of our Scientists is to develop their energies in the direction of the development of new drugs for tropical diseases.

In our country, communicable diseases account for more than 2/3rd of the total morbidity and mortality. For the control and eradication of these diseases the Government are strengthening the National health Programmes. Due to resurgence of malaria in late 1960's and 1970's, the National Malaria Eradication Programme has been remodelled. This disease is now being tackled on a more scientific way. Similarly the other National Programmes relating to check of Fileria, Diarrhoeal diseases, kala-azar, Leprosy eradication, control of T.B. Blindness, Goitre and STDs are also receiving adequate attention of my Government. Though modern drugs are available still our scientists in the Research Centres, Universities and Industry need to put in special efforts to find out therapies for total and cheaper control over these diseases. A well coordinated plan of research efforts by Industry, Universities and Research Centres would certainly give more meaningful results.

I am told that in our country about Rs. 2000 crores worth of medicines are being produced per year. As you are aware, we are committed to achieve the goal of Health for All by 2000 A.D. For this the production of medicines has to increase many times. The Government has recently announced a new drug policy which I am sure will contribute for the growth of indigenous industry. I hope that it would be possible for the industry to grow at a much faster rate.

I am happy to know that Ranbaxy are engaged in the Research Work through its well-equipped Research Centre and a team of large number of Scientists. I am told that in the past one decade they have introduced a large number of essential and life-saving drugs. I am also happy to know that their export performance has been quite good and they have been exporting both bulk drugs and formulations matching

international standards to a number of countries. I feel that the major thrust should be on the production of more and more of preventive drugs for common ailments.

I understand that Ranbaxy are the largest manufacturers of semi-synthetic penicillin and cephalosporines group of antibiotics in the country. They have been manufacturing these drugs since 1977. Over the last 2 years they have enhanced their manufacturing capacities substantially through a massive investment of over Rs. 20 crores in Hoshiarpur District, Punjab.

I wish them all success in future.

## A Glorious Civilisation

IT IS USUALLY customary to express happiness while inaugurating conferences. I am indeed happy that Indian doctors have gathered here today to espouse the cause of peace. It is a matter of concern for all of us that the world has come to such a perilous state when even a minor mistake might result in total destruction of life on this planet of ours.

The escalating arms race, which is now threatening to engulf space, has brought us to dangerously close to the extinction of the human race that no citizen of the world can afford to ignore the threat from nuclear weapons.

Humanity is at the nuclear cross-roads. Unless we choose the right path, we can lead our planet and our glorious civilisation into eternal oblivion. All the previous wars mankind has fought have provided us historical lessons. A nuclear war will, however, be the very end of our history. There will be no victors leave alone the vanquished.

It is quite clear that there may not be any worthwhile survivors in a nuclear war. Even a "limited" nuclear war will have global effects through radiation fall out and a disturbed eco-system. The threat of a nuclear winter is very real and it is said by experts that almost all forms of life will become extinct due to the sharp drop in temperatures on the surface of the earth. Scientists speculate that only certain insects like cockroaches may probably survive. I hope that this will not be the legacy we leave behind.

Even the wages of the unfought nuclear war are disastrous. The build up of large nuclear arsenals and the massive amounts spent on developing new weapons result in diversion of scarce resources from developmental activities. In a world where 450 million people suffer from hunger or malnutrition, the colossal wastage of resources to accumulate weapons of wanton destruction is an unpardonable sin against humanity. If all these resources are utilised for welfare of humanity, our planet will become a paradise soon. Instead, military-industrial complexes which profit from war mongering, are allowed to

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Speech on the inaugural function of the national conference of the National Association of Indian Doctors for prevention of Nuclear War, New Delhi, March 20, 1987

flourish at the expense of the famished children of Africa. We must realize that the choice today is between the human race and the arms race.

All enlightened people must play a positive role in helping humanity to make the correct choice. There can be no more authentic or authoritative crusaders for the cause of life than doctors who daily strive to preserve life. As nuclear war is the 'final epidemic' for which there is no cure, medical men know that prevention is the only answer. They can make a great contribution to the cause of peace by educating the people about the dangers of a nuclear war and shattering the illusions of success and survival that some people may fondly cherish. From such knowledge of the horrors of war will grow a strong commitment for peace. A determined effort by the peace loving people of all countries can wrest the initiative from the politicians and defeat the war mongers. States are basically for welfare of the people, not meant for warfare only. It is sad that the welfare states are being pushed into the background by warfare states. I appeal to all countries in the world, especially the nuclear weapon powers to give up warfare and strive for welfare of humanity.

I have great pleasure in inaugurating this national conference and hope that they will continue their good work of educating and mobilising public opinion against a nuclear war. I pray that their efforts and the efforts of other peace loving forces will finally succeed and doctors can attend to their patients without worrying about the future of the world. I wish your deliberations all success.

## Experiments and Scientific Discoveries

I AM HAPPY to be associated with the inauguration of the seminar on the National Standard Examination in Physics organised by the Indian Association of Physics Teachers. It has given me enormous pleasure to know that fifteen thousand students all over the country took part in this examination, which is aimed at providing an opportunity to students to test themselves against a National standard.

I am happy to note that Physics has created enough awareness among our teachers and students to inspire them to raise the standards of Physics education in the country. Science and Technology have been playing a key role in the progress of our country. The modern age is that of science and technology. Man is trying to reach out in space and is trying to establish stations in outer space. Man has already conquered the Moon and is trying to explore many other planets. He is also engaged in exploring the depths of the oceans.

Man can never be satisfied with his achievements. He is always yearning to reach higher destinations and to unveil the secrets of nature. Many inventions have been made with the help of science and technology transforming the very life of man. It has been constant desire of people to improve the standards of their living by the dint of experiments and scientific discoveries.

It is a fact that the western nations have been ahead of us in the fields of science and technology. Unfortunately because of our long period of subjugation under foreign rule we could not march shoulder to shoulder with the advanced world. But after gaining independence we decided on a detailed programme of national reconstruction and set up a chain of laboratories and research institutions for charting out our better future.

Our Parliament adopted a Science Policy Resolution in 1958, the purpose of which was to accelerate scientific research. It is because of constant research that we have been able to achieve new heights in

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Speech on the inauguration of a seminar on the National Standard Examination in Physics organised by the Indian Association of Physics Teachers, New Delhi.  
June 14, 1987



agriculture, industry and defence. It is because of scientific progress that we have been able to do so much work in environment, oceanography, energy, broadcasting, metallurgy, communications, health and many other fields.

In 1983 we declared a new policy on Technology the objective of which was to utilize our human resources for the welfare of the mass of our people to enable us to safeguard our independence and unity. We made a new determination to modernize our equipments, conserve energy, upgrade environment and to achieve success in many other fields.

In 1971 the Department of Science and Technology was set up to give a new shape to our science and technology, undertake more researches and to coordinate science activities on the international plane. No country in the modern age can remain aloof. We have necessarily to promote cooperation and coordination with other developing nations.

For some years I have had the opportunity to witness the science exhibitions of students in connection with the birth anniversary of the builder of modern India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I have always been impressed by the originality of designs of science equipment made by young students. Given proper appreciation and support, these children can bring us laurels. They are the custodians of our future. They have to overcome difficulties, add to our resources and by discovering the secrets of nature they have to take the country on the road to progress.

India has always chosen the path of help and cooperation with other countries. History shows that India has never taken initiative to let down any other nation nor to harm anyone's interests. But whenever someone cast an evil eye on us, we faced our adversaries with complete determination and full force.

Never has the world been faced with such a danger of destruction as now. Never before have there been piled so many weapons of war which can result in total annihilation of the globe as at present. A little misunderstanding or a small mistake can embroil the world in nuclear conflagration, which can result in the obliteration of our planet. The use of atomic weapons can bring about Nuclear winter which can deprive the world of the warmth of the sun and cause unimaginable harm to all living beings.

We have to prevent such a situation from occurring. The only way is to promote spiritual power which should relieve tensions and create an

awareness of the possibilities of total annihilation. We must simultaneously use the power of science for our well being and promote and strengthen spiritual power. The fusion of knowledge and use of science is the best way of human survival.

It is necessary to adopt the most modern methods of teaching and testing so that our students can compare with the best in the world. I am happy to learn that Indian Association of Physics Teachers, which is a voluntary organisation devoted to improve standards of Physics teaching and research in the colleges and universities, has started this annual feature of National Standard Examination in Physics on a voluntary basis. I am told that the standard of this examination is such as would help in creating in the whole country a uniform level in teaching physics. This type of national level examinations can be adopted in other important areas of fundamental sciences like mathematics, chemistry, economics, history and philosophy. Attainment of uniform standards in important areas of studies will go a long way in strengthening unity and integrity.

I am glad that twentyfive top students out of the fifteen thousand students who appeared in the National Standard Examination are here to receive the gold medals and prizes. I heartily congratulate them on this happy occasion and hope that this will inspire others to exert more and reach excellence.

With these words I have the pleasure of inaugurating the seminar and wishing its deliberations a great success.

# **Economic Affairs**

## Engine of Growth

I AM PLEASED to be present here and to associate myself with the celebrations of the Association of Indian Engineering Industry which completes 90 years of dedicated service to the country's growth and development. It is only appropriate that the inaugural function of the 90th Year Celebration is being held in Calcutta which established a long and glorious tradition of industry and commerce. Calcutta has been the birth place of many an industry and I am glad that the AIEI has very thoughtfully chosen this city for this major function.

At the outset, let me convey my warm greetings and congratulations to the winners of the AIEI Awards of excellence who have been honoured today. I am sure that more and more companies in the country will become centres of excellence and thereby deserve honours and accolades. Let me wish the award winners greater successes in future and let me also exhort others to continuously strive for better performance.

The AIEI President, Shri Gurpreet Singh, has rightly termed engineering industry as the 'Engine of Growth'. All of us in this country are proud of the contribution made by the engineering industry to our economic development. Indeed some of our most outstanding successes have been in the field of engineering exports which have made us internationally known. He has talked of the very major share that engineering industry has in all the growth parameters of this country. Let me only urge the industry to keep up its good work and improve its performance in every sphere.

The country has entered a new phase of development, a phase which calls for greater dedication, commitment and effort by all concerned and the engineering industry in particular. Often, we have prided ourselves on being the tenth largest industrial power in the world. In order to accelerate the process of growth, it is imperative for us to keep pace with worldwide developments in science and technology. I am confident that our entrepreneurs in the engineering industry will take

up the gauntlet and do their utmost to bring India up in the international ranking of industrialised countries.

There is a new air of optimism in this country. The Government of India has made a firm resolve to strengthen the administration and increase speed and efficiency of decision-making so as to enable industry to surge ahead. This has already been reflected in some of the policy pronouncements made in the last few weeks. This will be an on-going process and will provide a new environment for accelerated industrial growth with optimum utilisation of our natural resources—men, machinery, skills and talents. It is for industry to rise to the challenge, seize the opportunities and take the country forward.

The time has now come for industry in general and engineering industry in particular to operate on the basis of a new culture, a culture based on consumer-orientation, competition and modern technology. There are special social responsibilities on the shoulders of the captains of our industry such as environment protection, pollution control, technical education and training and human resources development.

It is gratifying to note that the Association of Indian Engineering Industry are already working on a code of conduct and I call upon all members to strictly adhere to it. At the same time I feel that there must also be a mechanism of self-discipline within the Association so that those who do not adhere to the agreed code of conduct are suitably censured.

Quality must become a way of life with engineering industry. No doubt there are some Islands of excellence. It is my earnest belief that those who have not yet attained excellence in quality should rise and become centres of excellence in their own right. Unless quality culture begins at the top, no meaningful results are likely to emerge. It is in this context that I call upon all industrial magnets to adopt the concept of Total Quality Control in their corporate spheres. The best way to achieve success is to adopt quality as the basic parameter for every activity in your respective industries. Let us not forget that if we are to maintain our own in the international field, quality is the prime criterion. The demands in the international markets are rapidly changing and becoming more and more challenging, and we have to keep pace with quality requirements world-wide.

I would like to say a few words about the importance of productivity. Unless our labour, machine and material productivity increases, we will continue to lag behind other countries. I would call

upon AIEI to take this as a major project during its 90th Year Celebrations and draw some concrete plans to promote productivity in different segments of the engineering industry.

We live in a modern era, an era of electronics and computers. The Government of India is very keen that industry takes the fullest advantage of advances in electronics to increase quality, productivity and overall performance. This resolve has been reflected in some of the major policy decisions recently announced such as the Computer Policy. It is a challenge to the local industry to gear itself to face the future with conviction and courage. Let India rise to make best use of the second industrial revolution which is very much in progress today.

I would urge engineering industry to look after its most important asset, the human being. While complimenting AIEI on some commendable pioneering work in the area of Technical Education and Training, I would urge members of the engineering fraternity to pay much greater attention to human resources development. Let there be much greater involvement of engineering industry in the planning and development of curricula in schools, colleges, polytechnics, ITIs and IITs. Let there be greater exchange and greater interaction between institutions and engineering industry. Most important, let there be a commitment to training and development of human resources as a part of your corporate philosophy.

I can not conclude without saying a few words about the working class, without whose hard and sincere labour, no industry can succeed, who have made some progress since Independence. Of all the factors of production, labour is the most precious and valuable, which needs to be treated as messengers of God helping in the production of wealth. It is their welfare and maximisation of their happiness which constitute the secret of success in any industry. I appeal to all industrialists to give up their old prejudices against them and treat them on an equal footing whether it is in matter of wages or bonus or other welfare measures. It is through their labour that you build your fortunes and therefore they deserve a fair share in the newly created wealth. This will enable you to increase productivity and production per unit of input and help in accelerating progress in general.

I have focussed on some issues which deserve consideration by the engineering industry. The 7th plan presents many opportunities to the engineering fraternity. It is an opportunity for engineering industry to put its shoulder to the wheel of progress and help the country take quantum jumps in economic development. Our engineering industry has to prove that it is at par with the best in the world.

My very best wishes and warm greetings to AIEI on the occasion of its 90th birthday. The engineering industry has had a glorious beginning in the eastern part of our country and let me hope that this region will again lead the country into a modern future beyond the twentieth century.

## Progress and Prosperity

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today and to associate myself with the commissioning of Deep Water Wharf here. The Island with its fast growing economy, specialising in plantations and related extracting industries, needs more outlets. I understand that the local population consists of settlers from East Pakistan and local tribals also. I am impressed by the spirit of cooperation and brotherhood existing between all the sections of the population and I hope that it will be maintained.

Progress and prosperity depends upon peace and unity. India has made considerable progress within the democratic framework: Balanced regional economic development is one of the cardinal principles of our planning process, in terms of which every region of India has made progress. Naturally, the Union Government is giving special attention to the particular needs of far flung areas like mountainous, drought prone and island areas like yours. Improvement of water transport assumes in this context more importance and various schemes are drawn to this end. The other day I inaugurated a wharf at Port Blair, and that was the first stage of the whole programme to improve transport facilities between so many islands in this region. The completion of this wharf goes a long way in meeting the requirements of berthing facilities; it is still inadequate to receive bigger vessels. I hope that the second stage of this project when completed as contemplated in the 7th Plan, will meet all the needs of this island.

Before concluding, I would like to add a word of caution about the environment. God has gifted you with a rich tropical forest and it is upto you to preserve and protect it, instead of destroying it in the name of progress. You have to design schemes of development in such a manner that we do not lose even a single tree. We have to learn to live happily along with nature and beside nature.

My best wishes will be always with you. I thank you all for the warmth of welcome extended to me.

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Speech on the occasion of the Commissioning of Deep Water Wharf, Little Andamans, February 24, 1985



## Upgradation of Technology

I AM HAPPY to be here with you this evening for honouring our outstanding small scale industries entrepreneurs and in sharing their pleasure. I congratulate the awardees on the distinction being conferred on them which they no doubt richly deserve for their outstanding entrepreneurial abilities. I am sure their success will inspire others in this sector and they will endeavour to improve their performance in the coming years.

I had the pleasure of distributing these awards last year when I had suggested that a scheme should be evolved at the State level also to encourage entrepreneurship on similar lines. I am glad to know that SIDO has initiated action in that direction and some states have taken concrete steps to encourage entrepreneurs by introducing State Awards.

Despite the fact that promoting and developing entrepreneurship has been widely recognised in the country a lot remains to be done to ensure adequate and prompt availability of necessary inputs like providing the budding entrepreneurs with what is normally beyond their control. All of us know that one of the basic support needs of an entrepreneur is training in the fundamentals of management, in addition to infrastructural facilities and financial assistance.

It is heartening to note that about 24,000 persons have been directly trained by SIDO through its various small Industries Service Institutes in the country during the last decade, including 5100 women entrepreneurs. I would like to specially felicitate the two outstanding lady entrepreneurs who are in the list of awardees today for the courage and conviction shown by them in bringing up their enterprises. I am confident, that more and more women entrepreneurs in the country would follow suit and strive hard to achieve similar distinction.

Small Scale Industries have no doubt made creditable progress in our country, but there are some areas where a lot needs to be done, particularly relating to upgradation of technology. This is a

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Speech on giving away National Awards to outstanding small scale entrepreneurs, New Delhi.  
March 22, 1985

continuous process and institutional arrangements through small industries development organisation need to be stepped up. We have to find ways and means of bringing improvements in productivity and reaching higher performance levels. In this context, a constant dialogue and interaction between small scale industries entrepreneurs and our higher institutes of technology will go a long way in achieving the desired goals.

Though the name is small, the achievements of this sector are big enough to attract world-wide attention. By the end of 1983, I am told, there were a total of 11 lakhs of units, employing about 84 lakhs of persons. The importance of small scale units comes into prominence when it is known that nearly one-fourth of our total value of exports in 1982-83 emanated from this sector. There is a vast scope for development of electronics etc. Already many countries in the Third World are looking towards India for guidance and help in setting up small scale units in their countries. An impressive feature of these units is their capacity for dispersal, which is a great boon for countries like ours where bulk of population live scattered in lakhs of villages. We should always remember that drops make an ocean. Several experts from our country are now working in various countries assisting them in their programme of development of small scale industries. I am happy to learn that the International Workshop on sharing Expertise and Experience among small industries enterprises in developing countries organised by *SIDO* in collaboration with *UNIDO* last month was a great success. Such workshops and Seminars augur well for increased South-South Co-operation.

The scheme for giving National Awards for promoting and developing entrepreneurship in the small scale industry sector is indeed a step in the right direction. As a consequence, I am sure, the performance of small scale sector will get a boost, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

I would like to congratulate the award winners once again for their outstanding performance and for having won these National Awards. I am certain that they will not only keep up their efforts but will achieve further heights and try to earn further recognition in the future.

I thank the Minister for inviting me for this function.

## Bonds of Cultural Unity

**I**AM INDEED very happy to be here with you this morning. May I at the outset, offer my hearty congratulations to all the mastercrafts persons who have been selected for receiving this national recognition. I am confident that this national recognition of the outstanding excellence they have achieved will instill greater zeal and inspire them towards further artistic perfection. I am glad that the Ministry of Commerce and Supply have increased the number of National Awards from fifteen to thirty. I am also told that nearly all the State Governments have established similar awards at State-levels, and the total number of award winners annually is over five hundred now. This augurs well for the artisan community. The award winners should consider it their duty to train younger artisans so that the great traditions of Indian Handicrafts are passed on to the younger generation.

Craft has always been a basic economic activity in our society, transcending all communication barriers. Our handicrafts have been an integral part of our culture from time immemorial. Innumerable sacrifices have been made over the centuries by our traditional craftspersons to preserve and enrich the great heritage. They have made tremendous contribution to add sweetness and grace to the life of our people besides playing a significant role in keeping the bonds of cultural unity strong and vibrant. Eminent thinkers and discriminating observers of the international scene are slowly veering round to the view that small close-knit rural communities may well be the answer to the problems posed by pollution and other concomitant evils of a highly industrialised society. Fortunately, the choice before us in India is easier. In our scheme of industrialisation the place of handlooms and handicrafts is well ensured.

Our craftsmen and weavers have won admiration and prestige for our country since ancient times. Specimens of their workmanship adorn the houses of all sections of our people and travel to different parts of the world. For centuries our crafts were the backbone of the

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Speech on presentation of National Awards for Master-Crafts Persons 1983, New Delhi, April 2, 1985

Indian economy. Their contribution in keeping alive our cultural heritage and supporting the economy of today's India is of great value.

However, the competition from synthetic material is posing a problem. The urge for imitation and for new patterns of living are threatening the very survival not only of the old ways and of traditional articles, but even, unfortunately, of the instinctive good taste and the pride in achievement which were the hallmark of our artisans. It is in this context that we should try to see that handicrafts become increasingly relevant to our lives. While the country moves forward to modernity, we should like to remain profoundly Indian. It is in the arts and crafts that this spirit can best express itself.

I am glad to know that the Department has taken up a number of programmes and schemes for achieving higher standards of living for our craftsmen, for expanding markets both within the country and overseas, and for preserving the great craft heritage of our country.

After two decades of efforts when the country is covered by over 300 public sector emporia and where export earnings have touched a level of over 1700 crores of rupees per year, it is necessary to pause and think about the direction in which we should now move if our traditional artistic skills have to progress further in the global context. On the one hand, there is danger of degeneration of traditional art forms by the contact with new classes of buyers at home and overseas. On the other, there is the great possibility of the craftsman standing on his feet and to have the means to give full expression to his natural genius. I am happy that the Government has accepted this challenge in the confidence that our traditional crafts will continue to play a worthy role in the changed environment of modern India.

The National Awards for Mastercraftsmen instituted by the Union and State Governments have helped to inspire craftsmen to attain increasing excellence in their fields.

In addition to national recognition of the craftsmen's skills, sustained efforts have also to be made to identify the many problems faced by them and to devise solutions. Procurement of raw materials, healthy working conditions, adequate credit facilities, reasonable wages etc. are some of the areas calling for our attention. I wish the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts all success in its endeavour to ensure that the craft traditions of our country are suitably adapted to the needs of a changing market within the country and abroad.

Before concluding, I would like once again to congratulate the award winners. I wish our handicrafts Industry greater prosperity and our handicrafts-persons a more secure place of honour in the national economy.

## Pace of Progress

I AM GLAD to be here today and to associate myself with the inauguration of the two-wheeler project of Shree Chamundi Mopeds. Karnataka enjoys a long tradition of sound and development-oriented administration, thanks to its enlightened rulers and far-sighted administrators like Late Shri M. Visweswarayya. The State was in the forefront of advanced States at the time of our Independence with a well developed infrastructure. The pace of industrial progress has accelerated after Independence and it is very heartening to state that today Bangalore and Karnataka enjoy a special place of honour in our country. Some of the key industries like air-craft manufacturing, machine tools and electronics are located here. More than anything else, Karnataka enjoys the presence of enlightened industrial entrepreneurs who are striving to promote more and more industries. Shri A.P. Mehta, Chairman of Mehta Group of Industries, is one such pioneering entrepreneur who conceived this moped project with French Technology.

I hope that the mopeds manufactured here will go a long way in meeting the demand for two-wheelers. In recent years there has been a very rapid growth in the production of large variety of two-wheelers. The Chamundi Moped is one more welcome addition to the list of two-wheelers available to people in our country. An essential feature of modern economic development is speed in communications. I am confident that this two-wheeler will go a long way in meeting this essential need for speed and benefit a large number of people with economical means of personal transport.

Set up in backward area, this project, I hope, will give a fillip to further development by providing employment avenues to a large number of people both directly and indirectly. I am given to understand that this plant is pollution free and that there will be no adverse effects on ecology. This is a step in right direction and I appeal to all industrialists to emulate this example. In addition, I appeal to industrial entrepreneurs in the country to play a pioneering role in the

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Speech on inauguration of Shree Chamundi Mopeds Limited, Tumkur, June 6, 1985

promotion of environment and ecological balance, without which all development will be meaningless.

With these few words, I thank the Government of Karnataka, the Chief Minister of Karnataka, and Shri A.P. Mehta for inviting me here to inaugurate this project. I wish the venture all success.

## Path of Planning

I FEEL HAPPY to be here once again amidst you all and to inaugurate the Conference on National Integration and Economic Development. At the outset, I congratulate the Award Winners and hope that these awards will inspire others to strive for excellence.

India has made considerable economic progress since Independence in 1947, especially since the inception of Planning in 1952. It is a matter of history now that the development of Railways and Post and Telegraphs before Independence played a significant role in the integration of our country. Since Independence, balanced regional economic development of the country for elimination of poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance has been the principal objective of our planning. This objective is the direct outcome of our freedom struggle and immediate steps were taken to implement this through Five Year Plans. Even before our independence, planning for economic development was considered as necessary by leaders of our National Movement like Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and many others. We have chosen the path of planning through democratic means. We have achieved substantial economic development over the last more than three decades through successive Five Year Plans, and have entered this year the Seventh Plan period. It is a matter of pride for all of us to realise that India now is a food exporting country. Gone are the days of food deficits and famines and we are now in a position to face boldly any drought. All this has become possible because of heavy investments made in the past which gave us a massive infrastructure in irrigation, power, industry transport and communications, oil, education, health, science and technology. A unique feature of this developmental process is the integration of national economy which is a pre-requisite for national integration.

The existence of poverty in any form poses a threat to national integration. Through bold initiatives to tackle the problem of poverty in the last few years, considerable progress has been achieved, though

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Speech on the inauguration of the Conference on National Integration and Economic Development, July 8, 1985



a lot remains yet to be done. I am confident that we will make further progress in the current Seventh Five Year Plan period and in subsequent years to come, so that social and economic justice for the downtrodden and weaker sections, promised in our Constitution, becomes a reality.

This is an occasion for us to remember and applaud the contributions made by all sections of our population, especially the farmers in the fields and workers in the factories. I am aware that Indian entrepreneurs have demonstrated positive spirit and taken bold initiatives in the developmental process. Being the leaders of industry, belonging to affluent classes, our entrepreneurs have a social responsibility on their shoulders to supplement governmental efforts in the task to eliminate poverty and inequalities. Increasing prosperity of the people will increase country's prosperity and ensure national integration.

With these few words, I thank the organisers of the Institute of Economic Studies for inviting me here today. I wish you all success.

## New Ventures

I FEEL HAPPY to come here and to inaugurate the off-shore construction project undertaken by the Hindustan Shipyard. This is our first ship building yard which has grown steadily over the years since its inception in 1941. This is a fitting occasion to recall the launching of the first ship here *Jala Usha* by our beloved leader and first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. It was Panditji's vision that enabled India to be what it is today, a growing industrial power in the world. Top priority was given to ship building after Independence and our country can feel proud of being now one among the ship builders of the world. The Hindustan Shipyard has made significant progress under the successive Five Year Plans. It gives me added happiness that the Shipyard has undertaken this off-shore construction.

This construction will add a new dimension to the growing oil industry in our country. This off-shore construction, with its latest technology, will go a long way in strengthening the base of our petroleum industry.

Energy is the key factor in any modern industry and reaching self-sufficiency in this vital section is of paramount importance. Recently I had an opportunity to visit the oil and Natural Gas Commission at Dehra Dun and was impressed by its progress. Thanks to the efforts of ONGC, India is now well set on the road to self-sufficiency in oil. I am sure that this construction will give a fillip to the activities of ONGC and strengthen the oil economy of our country.

I congratulate the workers, engineers, technologists and other ranks of Shipyard for their good work and hope that this project will be completed speedily.

I thank the Shipyard's management for inviting me here.

## Boosting Exports

I AM GLAD to be here today and to inaugurate the Export Award Dedication and Felicitation function of the Eagle Flask Company. It gives me pleasure to visit Talegaon whose Municipal Council has completed hundred years of its existence. The Centenary of Talegaon coincides with the centenary of the Indian National Congress under whose banner the country achieved freedom.

Talegaon is a town with many distinctions. Talegaon has given the nation such holy men and social reformers as Sant Tukaram and Sant Gyaneshwar. It breathes the spirit of Chhatrapati Shivaji whose activities were centred around Talegaon, where a fierce battle took place between the Peshwas and the British. The lake in front of me is a man-made one, made by the Peshwas. The seed of industrialization in this area was sown by our great nationalist leader Lokmanya Balagangadhar Tilak, who, as part of his Swadeshi Movement, collected one paise from each family of the area and started in Talegaon, about 85 years ago, Paise Fund Glass Works as one of the first cooperatives, and by far one of the first glass factories in the country. In this context, I would like to suggest that the co-operative movement be strengthened further. It delivers goods at the grassroot level.

It is a matter of pride for all of us that Eagle Flask has been able to establish their products even in technologically advanced, highly competitive and quality conscious markets and increase their exports by six fold over the last year. This is a truly commendable performance, especially considering the fact that vacuum flask is a highly labour-intensive and non-traditional export item. Eagle Flask justly deserved the Special Export Award. I congratulate the workers and management for winning the Special Export Award. I also appreciate their dedication to quality and service.

I have been given to understand that the housewives of Talegaon have formed into a Mahila Mandal, and the members of the Mahila Mandal, are being provided with gainful employment in their spare

time. This gesture will go a long way in improving the quality of the life of the working families. I would like to commend the efforts of Mrs. Sushilabai Kibe in organising this Mahila Mandal.

The task of developing the country's economy is a long drawn process in which the Government as well as industrialists have to play complementary roles. The Government have built a massive infrastructure over the last thirty years. It must be said to the credit of industrialists that they have supplemented the efforts of the Government in industrialisation of the country. Our economy is poised now for further rapid growth. This is the time for our industrialists to upgrade production technology, improve quality and increase productivity, so that more gainful employment opportunities are created, and the products fulfil the consumer needs to the maximum. I also urge industry to give more thrust to exports and earn valuable foreign exchange for the country and help in maintaining a healthier balance of trade. The Government has set up various Export Promotion Councils to assist manufacturers in their export promotions. Indian industrialists and manufacturers should improve their competitive ability and take pride in exporting Indian goods to foreign markets. I would like that industrialists fully avail themselves of the help of these export bodies so that exports are given the necessary push.

With these few words I conclude by wishing the Talegaon Municipal Council all success in future.

## Agriculture—Our Mainstay

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here and to inaugurate the Fourth Indian Agriculture Congress. I congratulate the Indian Confederation of Agriculture for sponsoring this Conference here. It is very much in the fitness of things that, apart from farmers and those closely connected with agriculture, the Confederation has invited Ministers of Agriculture and Cooperative from many States to participate in the Congress. I am sure that this will enable them to have a very good opportunity to exchange experiences.

I am particularly happy that the Congress is being held at one of the nerve centres of the North-Eastern Region which will provide opportunity to the governments and farmers of these States to reflect on the important problems which are facing the agriculture of these States. I am told that all the seven States of the North-Eastern Sector are acting as joint hosts for holding this meet in their area. In this connection I wish to congratulate the Government of Meghalaya for shouldering the responsibility for holding the Congress in their capital.

I am a farmer myself and, all through my life, I have had close links with the farming community and have been a participant in their joys and sufferings. I am very much familiar with the ills from which agriculture suffers and the drawbacks which are inhibiting the growth of our agriculture. There are many constraints which are restraining the farmers and the rural people from bettering their economic and social life. The rural India is limping with a snail's speed while the urban India is making long jumps. Many people in the villages are still suffering from the lack of many elementary needs of life like drinking water, medical assistance, education and so on.

I am feeling happy to learn that the Confederation is making effort to create a platform where all those who are connected in any way with the bettering of health of the agriculture could come together and collectively reflect on the problems facing agriculture and rural India. Every section of population working in cities is well organised to seek

redress of their grievances. But, there is no worthwhile organisation to take up the problems facing this great mass of humanity who constitute 75 percent of our population. In this context I congratulate the Indian Confederation of Agriculture, which has started this series of Agriculture Congresses to meet once in every two years and discuss the problems of the agriculture. I am told the Confederation also holds occasional seminars on some burning problems which are attended by eminent experts connected with that subject.

Indian agriculture has made big strides during the past two decades. The advent of green revolution has brought about a phenomenal increase in our wheat production and the efforts, which are being made to increase production in rice have also started bearing fruit. Cash crops like cotton, jute, sugarcane and tobacco have registered noticeable increase in production. This is owing to the great efforts of our agricultural scientists and to the hard labour which our farmers have put in. Our country, which had been importing foodgrains—wheat and rice, years after years, has now become nearly self-sufficient and is in a position to export also. The above factor should not lead us to complacency. If we compare the figures of agricultural production per hectare in our country with figures of other countries, we find that we are very much at bottom of the ladder. This is a matter of concern which needs closest attention of our agricultural scientists and all those who are connected in any way with the promotion of agriculture in the country.

While the agricultural scientists have every reason to compliment themselves for not only giving to the country a large variety of new seeds and have evolved new methods in crop production, I feel that these have reached only a small portion of the farming community. The affluent ones among them have been benefitted more by these new research and adopted new technology and are also using the improved seeds for their crop production while a vast majority of the small and marginal farmers is yet to derive advantage out of their recent developments.

I want to stress that, unless we improve our yields per hectare particularly in the case of food crops, we shall have to continue to keep a large portion of our land under these crops with the result that we will face shortages in the production of other crops particularly the oil-seeds, the pulses and sugarcane, which are also equally important. It is, therefore, of greatest importance that we must strive to increase productivity per hectare. Our scientists, our extension people, our

administrators and farmers and our farm leaders must sit together to find out a strategy which should bring about an all round increase in our agricultural production.

I am given to understand that the Congress will consider the basic issues like the cooperatives which affect the life of the farmers and the rural people. As your Secretary-General has pointed out, this is one of the primary means which, if properly harnessed, can be of great assistance to the farmers not only to provide them with a lot of assistance in their production programme but also enable them to market their produce in a better manner and fetch the best price for them. Our cooperative movement is yet to grow fully into a good shape. It needs herculean efforts to remove the ills from which it is suffering from. I feel that cooperatives can be very successful and also very effective as institutions of progress. They are institutions of the people and for the people but if they are really to succeed they should be managed by the people. I have heard reports of mal-administration, mishandling and corruption in the day-to-day management of cooperative societies in many places. The persons, in whom the share-holders repose their confidence, should try to run institutions for the benefit of people.

If the functioning of the cooperatives is not improved, I am sure, people will lose all confidence in their working and a stage may come when people will shun to join societies and the movement may become completely infructuous and isolated. I understand that in this gathering there are a large number of delegates representing cooperative institutions in the country. I am glad that you are going to focus your attention on this subject and I am hopeful that your suggestions will be quite useful and help in eliminating the defects which have got into this very healthy and effective peoples' movement.

I am told that the Congress will also discuss about agricultural marketing and agricultural credit. These two are very vital subjects which affect the fortunes of our farmers. The government have initiated many programmes for helping the farmers to dispose of all the produce of their hard toil at remunerative prices. To depend entirely on government agencies will not bring full satisfactory results. The farmers have to create many more agencies themselves. If they take some real initiative in this field, they will achieve far more success.

Provision of credit to agriculture has been receiving closest attention of the government since the nationalisation of a number of commercial banks. This was the first step to see that the farmer is

provided with enough credit to enable him carry on his production programme without any hindrance. There are several agencies working in this field now—Commercial Banks, the rural banks and the cooperative banks. Many of you, who represent the agricultural banking sector, should be able to reflect on the problems faced by the farmers regarding credit and suggest ways and means to improve the situation.

I am glad that the subject of Rural Development is coming for close examination before the Congress. This is a very stupendous task in which all of us have to join hands to achieve success. Government have launched very ambitious schemes. You have to see that the benefits of all these reaches the farmers and the rural people. I am sure that the Congress will be able to make useful and practical suggestions.

Before concluding, I wish you all success in your endeavours.



## Safe Mining

I AM HAPPY to be here today to distribute the National Safety Awards (Mines) for the year 1985. While giving away these awards for the year 1984 in the month of January this year, I had desired that the number of prizes should be increased. I am glad that the Ministry of Labour have acted upon my advice.

Mining Industry plays an important role in the economic development of the country. Its importance can be seen from the fact that the value of minerals produced in the country is around Rs. 5000 crores, while the earnings from export of minerals is around Rs. 376 crores per year. The mining industry provides employment to about 1 million people. It is in the fitness of things, therefore, that massive investments have been planned in the 7th Plan period, this being to the tune of Rs. 6000 crores for coal mines and Rs. 12,627 crores for oil mines. This is expected to raise coal production to 242 million tonnes by 1990. I sincerely hope that the increased production of minerals in the country, which is so important for the industrial growth of the nation, would go hand in hand with safety and wellbeing of workers in the industry.

While the majority of mine workers in our country are employed in the nationalised sector, yet a substantial number is engaged in the private sector, including those working in small mines. Government attaches considerable importance to the cause of safety, health and welfare of all mine workers. Attainment of safety has to be a corporate objective like that of reaching production targets and consumer satisfaction. The lead in the matter must be provided by the top management. We have impressed upon all mining companies to have a well defined safety policy. I understand that safety policy has been formulated by all mining companies in the Public Sector, and in most of the organised Private Sector units. These mining companies have reportedly set up Internal Safety Organisation to translate managements' policies into practice. Such a move is in the right

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Speech at the National Safety Awards (Mines)—1985 Distribution Function, New Delhi, November 13, 1986

direction. I sincerely hope that the movement is carried forward with greater enthusiasm.

The desired goal of 'zero accident' in mining can not be achieved unless there is active cooperation and participation of all employees. In this connection trade union leaders have a very important role to play and they should encourage and lend active support to all programmes of training and education of workers in matters relating to safety and health. Statutory backing has been provided in the recent amendment of the Mines Act. Worker's participation in safety management through the twin institutions of Workmen's Inspectors and Pit Safety Committees has been envisaged. The best proof of the success of efforts put in by different establishments and the workers participation will be reflected through performance in the National Safety Awards (Mines) Scheme.

Accidents result in injury to workers and damage to equipments and of mines. Also disruption and dislocation of injury takes place with loss of production, time-off and medical expenses. As a consequence, there is human suffering and monetary loss, both directly and indirectly. Nearly 5 million mandays are reportedly lost per year through industrial accidents. State Insurance Corporations and Compensation Boards pay out nearly Rs. 150 crores per year as compensation connected with industrial accidents. In addition, the industry suffers indirect loss amounting to about Rs. 2000 crores per year. Thus control and preventive action for injuries is necessary not merely as a social objective, but also as an economic necessity. In this country where we are struggling to mobilise enough resources to finance our various development schemes, we can ill afford to waste our resources through accidents. On the other hand, any amount of expenditure incurred to avert accidents would certainly go a long way in improving production, productivity, efficiency, safety and health of the undertaking, eventually leading to recognition at the national level.

I heartily congratulate the Safety Award winners and urge upon other mines to emulate the efforts made by these award winners. All those who took active part in the contest indeed deserve our special appreciation and encouragement.

## **New Desires—New Expectations**

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here and to associate myself with the thirteenth Indian Paint Conference. The Indian Paint Association is a rare type of voluntary Association which covers all segments of Paint Industry in the country e.g. Tiny Sector, Small Scale Sector and Large Sector.

I am told that the Paint Association is trying to highlight the important properties of paint which is “Protection” to the surface to which it is applied. This I consider as important as it enables the country to protect its assets which get destroyed due to corrosion. I am told that loss on account of corrosion amounts to Rs. 2000 crores per annum. The Association has a great responsibility to project the usefulness of paint as a medium of Conservation.

Traditionally paint has been a product of relatively simple technology, but in the last two decades, there are significant developments giving improved qualities of high technology industrial and decorative paints conforming to International Standards. The Paint Industry's scope and role are increasing with industrialisation. The demand for paints is coming very fast and I am sure that the industry will prepare itself to meet the growing demand of all types.

I am glad to learn that every year the import of specialised paints is decreasing and at the same time export of paints has increased to more than Rs. 25 crores per annum. Indian Paint Industry must concentrate on finding export markets not only in developing countries but also in developed countries.

I am given to understand that Indian Paint Industry is fully conscious of its responsibility in reducing environmental pollution. More and more water based paints, high solid composition, powder coating etc. are being manufactured by the Industry with a view to reduce the pollution hazards. The Paint Industry should try to produce such type of paints which do not require petroleum based products like M.T.O. As such the paints like water based coating should be popularised by the Association. In certain cases these

coatings also conserve energy. I am certain that the guidelines of the Government will be strictly adhered to and the Government will consider proposals which are aimed at cleaning the atmosphere and saving the population from pollution hazards.

I am sure that during the two-day conference, the delegates from all sectors of Paint Industry in India will deliberate on their problems especially new technology and marketing, and make an effort to acquaint themselves with the latest trends in the industry. I am glad that a number of experts from various developed countries have come to participate in this gathering.

The theme of the Conference "Paint For 21st Century" resounds the national importance of this Conference. A whole set of new generation of people will have new desires and new expectations. Since the impact of technological development on the people and nation is tremendous, the pattern of changes in Industrial activity will have its effect on human life-style.

The conference should make serious efforts to improve the employment opportunities in paint industry. If the Conference follows its theme, there should be tremendous scope for increased employment as small scale sector guarantees more and more employment in urban as well as rural areas.

India is advancing very fast as an industrial country and along with it the scope of exporting knowledge is getting enlarged. I am sure the Indian paint industry will take advantage of the growing opportunities and augment the process of exporting the skill and experience of setting up and modernizing Paint Units in other developing countries.

It is well to remember that the Government has classified paints in "Export thrust area" and has assured all assistance to the genuine exporters. Advantage of the liberal policies followed by the Government in regard to technology transfers, liberal imports of capital goods and raw materials etc. should be taken by the captains of industry, and strive for achieving progress and prosperity.

I wish the Conference all success.

## New Dimensions

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be with you today for the opening of AHARA'87—the Third International Food Exhibition organised by the Trade Fair Authority of India. I am grateful to Shri Mohammad Yunus, Chairman, Trade Fair Authority of India for giving me the opportunity to inaugurate this exhibition.

Food is one of the most vital segments of our national economy and the Government has assigned utmost priority in its various Five Year Plans to increasing production and productivity in the agricultural sector. The attention, care and support offered to the farming community during the last three decades and more, has resulted in agricultural production rising from 51 million tonnes in 1950-51 to 152.4 million tonnes in 1983-84 and 146.2 million tonnes in 1984-85, which was significantly higher than the average level of 138.20 million tonnes achieved during the Sixth Plan period.

Despite unfavourable weather conditions, the country also harvested record levels of production in respect of certain non-foodgrain crops like oil-seeds, cotton and potatoes. Supported by updated farm technologies, scientific research and agricultural extension, food production has acquired a great measure of resilience and stability so much so that India, today, apart from meeting domestic food requirement for our people, is also in a position to export.

Increased agricultural production has helped subsequent growth of the food and agriculture industry. Food industries constitute the most important component in agro-industries, especially in developing country like India where 76 per cent of the population still depends upon agriculture. The food industries have, therefore, a crucial role to play in improving socio-economic conditions of the masses by employing innovating methods in processing, packaging, storage and marketing of value-added products derived from agricultural, horticultural, animal husbandry, poultry, aquatic and forest resources.

The dominant role of agriculture sector in the Indian economy is getting increasingly reflected in the export sector. I am told that agriculture sector is a significant export earner accounting for 25 to 30 percent of total exports. Though the scope for and the potential of agricultural export is indeed tremendous, it still remains to be explored and exploited.

Our aim and efforts will be to double the agricultural exports which are around a level of Rs. 2700 crores a year, by the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan. I am informed that a number of commodities and products in the agricultural sector, such as processed food items, marine products, fruit and vegetables, meat and poultry products for export development have been identified. As you are aware, India is also emerging as an exporter of foodgrains namely wheat and quality rice. Of course, we shall continue to accord priority to the domestic needs and requirements and generally the surplus will be earmarked for export.

Our strategy of export development would be within the overall strategy of agricultural development. As you all know, the pattern of agricultural development has undergone qualitative and quantitative changes during the recent years, despite vagaries of weather, droughts and floods.

There is still a need to improve the overall production of foodgrains in the country and to step up the per acre yield of crops. We have gained considerable expertise in the field of agriculture and allied fields and today we are in a position to offer consultancy services and to take up turn-key projects on agricultural research and education, dryland agriculture, food preservation, milk production, preservation of milk, animal and poultry products, development of dairy equipment, imparting training on fisheries, post harvest technology, fibre products, soil and water management, plantation crops, seed production and technology, production and testing of vaccines, utilisation of solar and wind energies and so on. In all this, we must thank our millions of agricultural labourers, small farmers and others who helped the country in attaining this growth in agriculture.

I am told that the first two food exhibitions AHARA'85 and AHARA'86 were a successful in terms of business generated at the two fairs as well as the number of visitors and trade delegations who visited these Fairs. I understand that the business turn-over at the two fairs was reported about Rs. 10 crores during 1985 and Rs. 20 crores during 1986 and about 2 million visitors visited these exhibitions each year. I

have no doubt that AHARA '87 will add a new dimension and achieve even better results.

With these words, I inaugurate AHARA'87 and wish it all success.

## Wheels of Progress

I AM GLAD to be associated with the International Conference at CHEMTECH+Oil & Gas '87. It is an important occasion as the discussions at this meet will centre round some vital issues concerning the development of our country.

Oil exploration and production is one of the most important tasks on the nation's agenda, because our present and future depend upon our ability to attain self-sufficiency in this sphere. Oil is the biggest item of our imports and has been causing a major drain on our foreign exchange resources. Our country has been making tremendous efforts at exploration and production of oil and gas and these efforts have to continue with much more vigour and devotion to reach the goal of self-sufficiency.

Wheels of our progress depend on the production of energy. Apart from traditional sources like thermal and hydro-electric power, our country has been busy with experimenting and producing energy through other means and, I am glad, that this Conference will be considering these aspects in depth at the various symposia during the next four days.

We have almost completed forty years of our Independence and during this period we have made many faceted progress. The most significant advances have been made in the field of agriculture, as trebling food production since Independence is no mean an achievement. In main part, it is due to our improved technology including research seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. There are several other aspects like soil conservation, water management, mechanization and additional crops etc. which were all result of farsightedness of our planners.

For maintaining the tempo of progress in agricultural sphere, we need greater mechanization and energy, as dependence only on rain fall naturally can cause us a setback in the drought years. So it is for our very survival that we need to conserve energy from wasteful uses and to produce more energy for our progress.

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Speech at the Inauguration of the International Conference at CHEMTECH+Oil and Gas '87, Bombay, February 24, 1987



The per capita consumption of energy in India and other developing countries is much less than the advanced nations. Our experts must redouble their efforts to create energy in greater quantum to enable us to keep pace in industrialization and science.

I am glad to know that during the Seventh Plan four huge petrochemical projects in Maharashtra, Gujarat, U.P. and West Bengal are expected to be completed. It is heartening that oil & gas, energy, chemicals and process engineering industries have been given priority.

In a democratic set up government alone can not tackle all developmental tasks. Non-governmental organisations and private entrepreneurs have also to play their due role in ensuring growth and progress. It is encouraging that an organization like CHEMTECH foundation is active in augmenting the technological capacity of the country by acquiring expertise from other sources. We must acquire modern skills and also let the outside world benefit from our own research and development. We should have a better exchange of innovative ideas and highlight the new lines of production and processes.

The efforts of India must centre on increasing exports, if we want to have a balanced foreign trade. We faced a huge trade deficit last year, but fortunately exports have started picking up once again. But we can never afford to be complacent in this regard and need to make unremitting efforts to augment our exports. In this connection it is important for us to ensure the high quality of our manufactures. The export of substandard goods will bring great harm to us, as we are likely to lose our reputation in the world market.

It is equally important to resort to import substitution. I have known some highly innovative and ingenious technicians in our country, who reduced their dependence on imported equipment by manufacturing indigenous machinery and parts. That also builds a sense of self-reliance.

While considering alternative sources of energy, I hope our experts would ponder over in great depth the production of solar energy. It has tremendous possibilities and if we can develop this source in abundance, a great transformation in our economic life is likely to take place.

A very important aspect of our national life is promotion of health. Apart from malnutrition, ignorance and poverty, pollution is a major cause of diseases afflicting our people. I am glad to know that CHEMTECH Foundation is much concerned about this aspect.

Safety in plants, industries, mines and even in agriculture is very important to avoid accidents resulting in major injury and death. CHEMTECH will do well to chalk out a comprehensive plan to minimise industrial accidents.

It is good that CHEMTECH foundation has instituted the "Environmentalism of the Year" award. It will encourage scientists and environmentalists, but institution of one award would not suffice. It is important that environment protection should be made an integral part of our educational system. Apart from the syllabi of schools and colleges, a network should be created to arouse wide consciousness among the rural population to preserve ecological balance. Though our chemical industry is conscious of the damage caused by pollution, I have a feeling that enough attention has not been paid to this aspect so far, especially in densely populated urban areas, where air and noise pollution have assumed alarming dimensions.

I am glad to know that CHEMTECH is also paying attention to retrieving chemicals through recycling of industrial wastes and effluents. It is important that you share this technology with other industrialists in various parts of the country for greater benefit of the nation.

An international conference and the exhibition that you have arranged displaying recent technologies and equipment, I hope, will benefit industrialists and entrepreneur.

CHEMTECH oil and Gas'87 should provide valuable opportunity to business visitors to survey the indigenous industry and the expertise offered by renowned organisations from abroad. It will provide first hand information on new developments, research findings and the practical applications of advanced technologies.

I give you my good wishes in your deliberations and your efforts. India is very dear to us. We are facing many challenges in the present times. These challenges consist of progress and development, maintenance and promotion of our unity and integrity, safeguarding our secular, democratic and socialist institutions and above all to defend our borders from any foreign aggression. At the same time we have to play our role in reducing world tensions and promotion of peace. We have always raised our voice in favour of human equality and to bring about a new world order which should eliminate exploitation, inequity and injustice. It should promote a just and humane world society. To achieve all this we have to strengthen our economic base. I am glad that you are all engaged in furthering this task, for which I wish you well.

## Habit of Helpfulness

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here and to associate myself with the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the New Bank of India. I congratulate all those concerned with the successful running of the bank over the past fifty years. I am impressed by the progress made by the bank especially after its nationalisation. Two functions of banking are important—one of accepting deposits and the other of lending money for investment of funds. The major role of banks is deployment of funds of the community for its benefit so as to increase profitability, production and employment. Thus they play a vital role in the economic development of our country. They are not mere spectators of economic growth but they provide inspirations by encouraging people to invest and invent in productive activities.

Our banking industry has performed remarkably well during the last four decades, particularly since nationalisation of 14 major scheduled commercial banks in July 1969. A rapid expansion of banks' branches, particularly in rural, semi-urban and hitherto unbanked areas has taken place so much so there are now 53,000 branches of commercial banks in the country as on December 26, 1986 having aggregate deposits of Rs. 1,00,964 crores. The average population served by a bank office has declined from 65,000 to 13,000 between July, 1969 and December, 1986.

Through timely provision of credit facilities to farmers as well as industrialists, the banks have contributed a lot to Green Revolution, the White Revolution as also regional industrialisation. By granting concessional finance to small entrepreneurs, banks have played a pivotal role in developing enterprise in the country. The creation of a new class of entrepreneurs and self-employed persons weaning them away from "job seekers market" owes itself to the risk taking abilities of the banks.

I would like to say with emphasis that the most commendable job done by the banks is their ready response to the Government's poverty

alleviation programmes meant for ensuring speedy economic upliftment of the poor and downtrodden sections of our population. Real India is rural India and, therefore, by extending a helping hand to the poor village folk and in associating with the rural development programmes of the Government, the banking community has done a great service to the nation. Whether it is Integrated Rural Development Programme or Differential Rate of Interest Scheme or Scheme for Educated Unemployed Youth or Scheme for Helping the Urban Poor, the banks have come upto the expectations of the Government by fully implementing these programmes.

There are many areas for improvements so as to see that the benefits of various bank loan schemes formulated for rural development, particularly for weaker sections of the society reach the real beneficiaries. The bankers and Government Officials at all levels should have proper and effective coordination amongst themselves to make sure that the benefits of concessional bank finance, which is scarce, invariably accrue to the needy and does not get diverted to unintended persons.

I am told that the area for deep concern for bankers is the non-realisation of loan from the borrowers. The problem of overdues gets accentuated when the big borrowers with capacity to repay do not repay. This is a social evil which has to be tackled in a proper way.

Since banking is essentially a service industry, growth of a banking institution depends on the type and quality of service it can render to its customers. It is only the quality of service which would differentiate one bank from another as also one branch of a particular bank from another branch. The customer, therefore, certainly favours a bank against another when he opens an account and places his savings at the disposal of the banker. One often comes across complaints that banks are not providing prompt, efficient and courteous service to their customers which must receive serious attention of all concerned particularly the banks' managements. It is imperative that the staff at all levels in branches must be motivated and trained to provide efficient service to the banks' customers. Attitudinal changes for cultivation of 'habit of helpfulness' have to be brought about in the behaviour of the banks' staff.

Accuracy of banks' operations is another area demanding immediate attention. It is necessary that house-keeping functions of the banks are kept upto date. Needless to mention that any laxity in this regard may prove very costly particularly when the work

pertaining to balancing of books or reconciliation of inter-branch transactions falls in arrear as it helps unscrupulous persons to commit frauds on banks.

The New Bank of India has made considerable progress during the last couple of years and I congratulate the Chairman Shri R.C. Suneja and all other members of the management and staff for their devotion and excellent team work. Shri Suneja deserves to be congratulated for his winning the Shiromani Award for his contribution to the development of Banking in India.

Before concluding with these few words I once again congratulate the Bank and wish it great success in future.

## Path Finders of Economy

I AM GLAD to be here this morning and to associate myself with the 9th Economic Conference sponsored by the Institute of Trade and Industrial Development, New Delhi. The theme of today's Conference, "Indian Economy 2001 AD" is a very appropriate one in the present context of Indian economy which has reached a stage of accelerated change and growth.

I find before me many industrialists and business executives that are engaged in the task of economic development of the country and I would like to share some thoughts on the subject chosen for the Conference. There can be no two opinions that our National Income should grow at much rapid rate. Our economy is essentially agricultural with more than 75 per cent of people depending on it for their livelihood. Rapid and broad-based agricultural growth is a necessary pre-requisite for accelerating the pace of overall economy development and to tackle the chronic problem of deep-rooted poverty. Poverty alleviation rests on the twin plans of rapid and sustained growth in overall output, employment and income earning opportunities for those who are below the poverty line.

The history of economic development throughout the world shows that the countries which have come up very fast are the ones which performed exceedingly well in the manufacturing sector. There is no set pattern of growth applicable for all countries. Every country has to shape its policies and objectives to suit its own peculiarities and special problems.

At the time of Independence, industry in India was limited to a few extractive industries like textile and sugar. The Industrial Policy Resolution adopted in 1956 in the wake of planning laid great emphasis on accelerating the pace of industrialisation, in particular the development of heavy industries through public sector. I am generally satisfied with the philosophy of public sector enterprises, but at the same time I would like to see that there should be greater efficiency, healthy management and proper return for the hard earned

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Speech on the inauguration of the 9th Economic Conference sponsored by the Institute of Trade and Industrial Development, New Delhi, May 16, 1987

money of the people invested in these enterprises. Some units have been in the red constantly, though some of the units have made profits alongwith fulfilling their social objectives. I appreciate the efforts of the management of such enterprises.

We have made significant progress since then under successive Five Year Plans. Industrial output in India has grown at a compound rate of 6 per cent per annum as compared to 2 per cent in the first half of the century. Indian industry has made significant achievement in the range of sophistication of manufactured products. The weight of capital goods in industrial production has increased. India has emerged as a large exporter of manufactured products not only of consumer goods but also capital equipment like cement, sugar plants, textile machinery, thermal power plants, blast furnaces, etc. The manufactured products figure prominently now in our exports. Our Engineering goods are being exported not only to developing countries but also to some of the developed countries. We have to pay special attention to the development of small scale sector as it can generate more employment opportunities. Some countries have achieved notable economic prosperity through small scale sector. A modern and prosperous agricultural sector provides a sound base for rapid industrialisation. Agriculture is no more a subsistence occupation but a thriving sector, having undergone a structural transformation in the past three decades. Thanks to the combined efforts of farmers, scientists and planners over the past many years, our foodgrain output has increased from 50 million tonnes in 1950-51 to over 150 million tonnes in 1986. Though two years back we had reached 153 million tonnes mark, owing to unprecedented drought we have fallen back at 150 million tonnes production. What gives me more satisfaction is the existence of a buffer stock which imparts a degree of resilience and stability to the Indian economy. Thus the Indian economy has acquired tremendous degree of technological depth and diversification.

The acid test of the success of our efforts in raising the growth rate in the Industrial sector and making industrialisation socially relevant would be to ensure that quality wage goods are available to all. A matter of concern to all is to see that the efficiency of capital employed should not be allowed to deteriorate. The capital should be made more productive so as to make Indian economy more competitive.

Technology management and planning have a vital role to play in this. Besides importing much needed technologies in the short run

greater reliance should be placed on the need to attain self-sufficiency through consistent research and development efforts at home. It is agreed that India ranks third in terms of skilled manpower in the world. This gives India an advantageous position in so far as future industrialisation is concerned.

The journey of our economy during the next 15 years will not be a joy ride. To become an industrial power in the world we will have to do a lot and improve the quality in all the spheres; and undertake a major drive for quality consciousness so as to make our presence felt in world markets. In this regard examples of some countries who have come to the forefront of manufacturing countries in the world may be studied profitably by us and emulate them wherever it suits us.

I congratulate the Institute of Trade and Industrial Development for taking initiative in organising this Conference. The representatives of Industry, Administration, Economists and planners are all here. You are the path-finders of economic development of our country. I am confident that the deliberations of this Conference will give useful suggestions for speeding growth of our economy in the coming year. I wish you all success, as on your success depends the prosperity of our nation.

With these words I have great pleasure in inaugurating the Conference.



# **Social Welfare**

## Create a Healthy Society

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today and associate myself with the mass marriage function. At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Kerala Government for organising this type of function this year, which has been proclaimed in this state as the year of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Kerala is a land of many religious faiths, living side by side with exemplary cooperation and spirit of brotherhood.

Kerala has made a rich and original contribution to the composite cultural heritage of India. I would like to recall especially the great and history making endeavours of Adi Sankaracharya, who travelled on foot across the length and breadth of our motherland centuries ago, to preach the universal message of oneness of divinity, that is embodied in all. This is the fundamental truth upheld by all faiths, which is also referred to as the essence of Sanatan Dharma. Our faith in secularism, which is emphasised in our Constitution, is based on this universal truth.

I feel heartened to note that this function has been organised with the voluntary help and assistance through liberal donations from the well-to-do sections of the population. The idea behind this mass marriage programme is laudable. This puts an end to the dowry problem, the pernicious social evil afflicting our society. The ceremony itself is performed with a minimum expenditure and strengthen the spirit of brotherhood among people. Last but not the least is its character of social reform without pomp, show, ostentation and elaborate ritual. I am impressed by the fact that the new couples are from extremely poor families from various religious faiths. This is thrilling event which I hope will be emulated elsewhere in our vast country.

I convey my best wishes to the new couples and wish them a prosperous and happy married life.

I thank the Government of Kerala for inviting me here today.

## Shelter to the Homeless

**I** AM GLAD to be here today and to lay the foundation stone of this housing project. I readily accepted the invitation, when told that this is connected with providing of shelter to the homeless. Shelter is next in importance only to food and clothing, for civilised existence. This is the reason for according high priority to housing in our socio-economic development plans. It is to focus attention on this vital necessity, the Government of India has declared 1987 to be observed as the International Year of Shelter for the homeless. In this context, I commend this programme as in the right direction and congratulate the Kerala Government for their efforts.

India is committed to the policy of 'Health for all by 2000 A.D.' Housing is essential to create a healthy environment. As such, I hope that in this vital field also, our efforts to provide shelter for all those who are homeless now may bear fruit by 2000 A.D. Housing should be considered as an essential item in any integrated developmental plan, instead of treating it as a separate sector, from the social point of view. In fact, housing should occupy a more central place, because a house is as essential to this body as the body to the soul.

I am told, that this project has been taken up as a pilot project to be implemented by the Kerala State Housing Board, in close cooperation with other agencies, at a total cost of Rs. 68 lakhs. When the whole scheme is implemented as envisaged, in the five acre plot with 250 tenements of a permanent nature, the problem of providing shelter to the needy would be solved to some extent. This will also help simultaneously in clearing slums in this growing city of Cochin.

There is a tendency for slums to increase around industrialising townships and cities. Prevention is better than cure in this field also. Housing projects like this, if planned and taken up much in advance of setting up industrial plants, on a continuous basis, will go a long way in preventing slums and other concomitant evils. I hope that the authorities will bestow more attention on this as a top priority item.

Recently, our country witnessed a great tragedy at Bhopal, in the neighbourhood slums around the carbide factory. This could have been largely avoided with imagination and advance planning to develop and create good environment. We should not forget the lessons of Bhopal incident and must try our best to prevent such occurrences in future. All housing projects in future should be dovetailed into industrial planning and environmental development.

I thank the Government of Kerala for inviting me to this function.

## Our Equal Partners

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here and to declare open the building of the Kerala Federation of the Blind. The Federation has made appreciable progress since its inception in 1967. It is gratifying to know that the Federation is striving hard to promote the educational, vocational and cultural well-being of the blind in the State. I congratulate the office bearers and other workers of the Federation for their voluntary efforts and I hope they will continue to increase the scale of their operations extending to other types of handicapped persons also throughout the State.

State and society have a responsibility on their shoulders to look after the handicapped. Service to them should be considered as service to God not as a mere act of charity or philanthropy out of pity for them. This is the essence of our tradition, the greatest exponent of which in recent times was Mahatma Gandhi. It is not enough to have mere compassion for them. It is necessary to translate these inner instincts of man into action by looking after the welfare of the handicapped as equal partners in society. It is absolutely essential to drive away the sense of inferiority from the minds of these unfortunate brothers and sisters, from a psychological point of view. Here is an occasion before the well-to-do people to share their resources with less fortunate persons. This should be considered as an opportunity by the fortunate to render selfless service to the handicapped.

Our ideal is to create a welfare society based on justice and equality—political, economic and social and free from exploitation. Our concept is a universal one and embraces all, irrespective of religion, language, colour or creed. We have to exert vigorously to achieve this ideal and march forward towards the goal.

I am told that the Kerala Federation of Blind is doing commendable work in the field and I hope they will continue to strive with redoubled strength. I am sure that the Building of the Federation, just now open, will go a long way in fulfilling one of their long-felt needs and inspire them to intensify their activities.

I thank the Government of Kerala and the Kerala federation of the Blind for inviting me to this function.

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Speech on the occasion of opening of the Building of Kerala Federation of the Blind, Trivandrum, February 7, 1985

## A Pioneer of Psychiatry

I AM VERY happy to be with you all today and to lay the foundation stone of Dr. Vidya Sagar Kaushalya Devi Memorial Health Centre. It gives me added pleasure to know that the proposed institution will be a memorial in honour of Late Dr. Vidya Sagar. I had known him in Punjab as the Head of Mental Hospital, Amritsar and Professor of Psychiatry at the Amritsar Medical College. He was perhaps one of the great pioneers in the field of mental health and in fact he was called the Father of psychiatric discipline in India because he evolved a new approach to mental disease by treating the patients in their own homes. It was a revolution at that time. In his untiring selfless service, he had an exemplary self-effacing character. In the undivided Punjab and after, all sections of population knew him as a person of boundless energy, full of the milk of human kindness, completely devoted to his work. He never cared for rest in life. He had a rare quality of healing touch. His life and precept are and will continue to be a source of inspiration for the coming generations.

It is generally believed that mental illness is directly related to economic wants, stress and strain of modern life, anxiety, hysteria and neurotic depressions. We have to take into account the mentally retarded children who are estimated at 0.5 to 1% of all children. The alcohol abuse, alcohol and drug dependence appear to be growing problems associated mainly with new stresses of urbanization and industrialisation. Their prevalence is also high in rural areas. Similarly, psychiatric problems among older people especially in the large urban areas are assuming high proportion due to the weakening of the traditional family structure and social support systems. It should be pointed out that suffering due to mental illness often is not confined to the affected individual, it causes severe social dysfunction of entire families. It can cause loss of productivity, income and evenness of life.

All these problems translated in figures present a very alarming scenario. According to most of the surveys, about 10-20 per thousand

of the population are affected by a serious mental disorder at any point of time. This would constitute nearly 50 million citizens of India.

From the available data it is safe to conclude that not more than 10% of those requiring urgent mental health care are receiving the needed help with the existing services. The situation is worse in the rural areas due to the heavy concentration of the services and facilities in the cities. It is also to be noted that a simple extension of the present system of care also will not be able to ensure adequate services to the vast majority of our population in the near foreseeable future because the psychiatric and para-psychiatric services in India are inadequate. The problem gets aggravated because of concentration of psychiatrists in the urban areas. Even with an increased rate of training of specialised staff, I feel that there is little hope to reach substantial portions of the rural population within the next two decades. Therefore, the situation calls for major changes in the approach to the problem as a whole.

The size of the problem is evidently stupendous and the challenge before the Health Care Planners demands urgent attention. A national plan must have a defined set of objectives and a defined course of strategy;

- (i) so as to ensure availability and accessibility of minimum mental health care for all in the foreseeable future, particularly to the most vulnerable and under-privileged sections of population.
- (ii) To encourage application of mental health knowledge in general health care and in social development.
- (iii) To promote community participation in the mental health service development and to stimulate efforts towards self-help in the community.

These objectives can be achieved better with a strategy which should:

- (i) direct available resources to the establishment and strengthening of Psychiatric Units in all District Hospitals, and
- (ii) train an increasing number of different categories of health personnel in basic psychiatric and mental health skills.

India is a signatory to the Alma Ata Declaration which envisages 'health for all' by the year 2000 as the goal. Efforts to ensure the achievement of this goal will have to include approaches and strategies for the improvement of all aspects of health-physical, mental and social. In fact a plan of action aiming at the mental health component

of the national health programme, has already been evolved by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The scope of mental health is not confined to the treatment of some seriously ill persons admitted to mental hospitals alone. It relates to the whole range of health activities since man is essentially a thinking and feeling-being and no scheme of health planning can be complete which does not take the mental health component into account. It is in this context that the efficacy of prayers and spiritual treatments of the patients assumes more than usual significance and I recommend this method to be given a serious attention.

The proposed Health Centre is welcome and desirable as it supplements the efforts of the Government.

There is no greater honour to a worthy son of India as Dr. Vidya Sagar was, to build a memorial of this kind which not only brings back the memories of his honest and selfless service but holds the promise of spreading his example in the service of the mentally ill.

I am particularly happy to know that the Health Centre is going to combine diagnostic services alongwith psychiatric services and the Centre aims at providing preventive and promotive services to the rural people, children in schools and students in colleges.

I bless the initiative taken by the Trust and wish them all success in this laudable enterprise.



## Devotion and Dedication

I AM VERY glad to be here amidst lady social workers of the Andamans and Nicobar Islands. For me this is a fulfilment of a promise. Last year when some of you called on me at Delhi during your Bharat Darshan Tour, I expressed the desire to come and visit you. I feel happy now for having come here and being able to meet you all.

The Social Welfare Board and other women's organisations are doing excellent work and I congratulate you all for the devotion and dedication to the cause of social welfare, especially welfare of women and children.

The very concept of women brings forth the picture of mother before us. It is this motherly instinct of women that distinguishes them as eminently suitable for social service. Also, it is mothers who shape the destinies of nations through shaping the destinies of children. You will find the affection and hard-work of mothers behind every great leader in history. There are many occupations like social service, medicine, teaching, nursing and so on where women excel others because of motherly instincts of love, compassion and selfless service. You can mould the children and prepare them as duty conscious citizens of our country. The future progress and prosperity depends upon the children of today. I am told that there are many *Balwadies* and *Anganwadies* here which provide outlets for the educational and emotional development of children. This speaks well of your initiative and enterprise.

With these few words, I conclude, by once again congratulating you on your excellent work. I hope you will keep it up and improve further.

## Enhancing Health Care

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be in this Great Nicobar Island today and associate myself with the inauguration of the Primary Health Centre. I am told that there are a number of ex-servicemen families settled here and they are living happily along with the local inhabitants belonging to Shompen and Nicobarese tribes. The ex-servicemen being the pioneers here, must have undergone lots of hardship. Their courage and determination deserve congratulations. I also would like to congratulate them for their spirit of service to people witnessed during the series of earthquake tremors in 1982. They have enriched the glorious tradition of India's Defence Forces. The signs of progress on account of growing coconut and fruit plantations are quite visible and I am sure that the transportation must have received a fresh boost with the introduction of two more boats last year.

The Primary Health Centre is now housed in its own building and I hope that this will enhance health care of the public by becoming an apex body for the ten dispensaries functioning already in the island since 1969.

Health for all by 2000 A.D. is the committed policy of the Government and I do hope that it will be achieved here also. Good and healthy environment is the primary pre-requisite of good health of the people. Therefore, I appeal to all of you to preserve and protect the natural environment and enrich it further.

I thank you for extending warm hearted welcome to me which I will cherish for a long time. I wish you all success.

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Speech on the inauguration of the Primary Health Centre at Campbell Bay, Great Nicobar Islands, February 25, 1985

## Activity and Mobility

**I**AM HAPPY to be here today and to associate myself with the International Conference on Spinal Injuries. I have been taking keen interest in this project from the beginning and I feel satisfied with the success of the initial efforts of the organisers to set up a full-fledged medical centre for those suffering from spinal injuries and other related disorders.

In every society, those who suffer from physical and mental disability receive special consideration and attention. In our country, this has come to us as a well established tradition woven into our outlook of life. Treatment of the sick and handicapped was considered as worship of God itself and was accorded a high place in our ancient treatises on Ayurveda. Let us not forget that it was the sight of the sick and the aged that moved Gautama the Buddha to revolt against misery and injustice, who gave us an entirely new code of conduct based on compassion. This is the basic human instinct which finds expression through social service and concern for the disabled.

Development in present day world takes place through industrialisation, mechanisation and urbanisation. The world is now in the space age with emphasis on speed. This trend is creating several problems, e.g. stress, strain, trauma and accidents.

Now-a-days it is common experience to find vehicles overturned in head-on collisions on city roads and highways and a large number of people sustaining serious injuries. I am told that while fractures in legs and arms can heal without permanent damage, the spinal and head injuries take a heavy toll. A paraplegic requires round the clock nursing and extensive medical care so that his life can be saved and he can face life with renewed courage and fortitude.

We have many examples of brave men who have proved that every disability can be overcome with determination the example of Major HPS Ahluwalia is right before us who has defied defeat despite heavy odds. There are a large number of such young men and women who have suffered spinal injuries. Let them not despair. They can contribute richly to the society because they have all the vigour and

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Speech on the Inauguration of the International Conference on Spinal Injuries, February 27, 1985

vitality of youth in their mind. It is the moral responsibility of the society to rehabilitate them, boost their morale and channelise their energy so as to enable them to lead independent lives, standing on their own.

I find that we have here with us top specialists in this field from all over the world. There are experts from neighbouring countries and also from England, Australia, Germany, Switzerland, USA. The problems of paraplegics are the same here as elsewhere. I am sure that foreign delegates will tell us how they are managing this problem in their respective countries. It will do good for our young experts to exchange views and experiences with them. I am confident that your endeavours will help in finding out suitable and practical solutions within the reach of every patient. I understand that there is going to be a research wing in the centre. The doctors and therapists must devote their time and energy in developing simple rehabilitation aids in the laboratories.

In our country we all depend too much on the Government for any progress or community facility. The effort by this organisation to establish a Centre and host this International Conference speaks well of what could be achieved with voluntary efforts. It gives me happiness to know that your objective is that no one should be in bed either in hospital or in his home on account of disability. Activity and mobility should be the motto of those connected with rehabilitation of paraplegics.

I have every hope that the exchange of ideas between our experts and foreign experts will help in formulating concrete plans to make this Centre a most up-to-date one. Society looks towards you as experts, to provide leadership in this field to the community. I am sure the quality of life for the disabled will improve in our country through your efforts. Let us all make efforts in the right direction and give them a chance to live and live well and not just lie in bed.

I have great pleasure in inaugurating this International Conference. I wish the organisers success in their endeavours.

## Assets of the Nation

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here with you all and to present the National Awards for Child Welfare. I have accepted this function as the cause of children and their upbringing is very dear to me and very important from the nation's point of view. I congratulate the award winners on their excellence and hope that others in this field will strive to achieve the same excellence.

I feel very happy to note that my suggestion last year to increase the number of awards as well as the monetary incentive has been acted upon and implemented this year. In the same manner, I appeal to the State Governments also to set up such awards in their respective states and give a fresh fillip to the movement of child welfare. The state can motivate voluntary agencies by providing basic facilities and incentives. Social workers should step up their efforts so as to cover all children in the country, especially those belonging to weaker sections of the population living in the rural areas.

Children constitute nation's wealth and its most precious capital. A child's cause is the nation's cause. A healthy and wealthy nation can be created with healthy children. Though the state provides the necessary apparatus for a requisite environment for children, the parents and community have a greater responsibility in their upbringing. I have emphasised the primary responsibility of parents on many occasions in the past. I would like to reiterate the same again as some erring parents do not bother at all about their own children.

The role of society and state in promoting welfare of children comes next only to that of parents. Such a comprehensive approach will become more meaningful and fruitful in realising the national policy for children and the efforts to enrich this supremely important asset of the nation will be successful.

Poverty is the basic reason for many of the ills afflicting children, not only in India but throughout the world. In this connection I appreciate the efforts being done by the UNICEF. In our country, a massive effort is going on to eradicate poverty, banish hunger and

prevent disease. All voluntary agencies should supplement the efforts of Government in this regard and help in bringing an era of prosperity to children. The cause of children started receiving world-wide attention since the year 1979, which was declared as the international year of the child by the United Nations. India is one of the leading nations to espouse the cause of the children and promote the efforts.

Once again, I congratulate the recipients of the National Awards for child welfare for their excellence in this field. I appeal to all voluntary organisations in the country to emulate their example and work with dedication and devotion.

I thank the Minister of Social and Women's welfare Shrimati M. Chandrasekhar for inviting me here and giving me this opportunity to meet you all.

## Reconciliation and Harmony

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be in your midst today and to inaugurate the Youth Festival. Mount Abu with its natural beauty is very well suited for a function of this nature. For quite some time *Brahma Kumaris* had been asking me to visit this place and they had been mentioning to me the spiritual merits of this place but when I am here I find that there is much more in this atmosphere than I had known. This place is so enchanting that one would like to stay here.

One can easily feel here the vibrations of purity all over. The great founder of this institution as also the *Brahma Kumaris*, like Dadi Ji, must have been practising here *tapasya*—intense meditation, so that the atmosphere here is spiritually surcharged. Science has given us gadgets which can keep our place cool even in hot summer but the peace of the soul can be had only where there are holy people and *tapaswis*.

The festival of Youth for which you have invited me, is something which I really love. Your *Vishwavidyalaya* will be sending youth groups to villages to inspire people to give up tobacco, alcohol and other intoxicating drugs, to give up violence and such social evils as child marriages and dowries, and to practise birth control through self-control. I think this is a great service they will be doing to our country in this year of International Youth.

Sisters and brothers! India lives in villages and villagers have many good qualities which are not visible in the overcrowded urban centres. Villagers have more communal harmony. They are more hospitable and goodhearted. However, there is need to improve sanitation and provide healthy environment. If you take to them the message of a pure life, they will be more responsive. I am sure that this effort of going on foot all the way from Kanyakumari or Calcutta and other places to Delhi, meeting villagers everywhere on the way will bear ample fruit. By doing so, you will be taking up work which was very dear to Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave.

Sisters and brothers! One thing about which we all feel deeply concerned is the present atmosphere of violence and communal

discord. I ask, why is there hatred and bloodshed among people of various religions? Why violence in a democracy? Why does brother fight brother? There is so much loss of life and property in the world today because of violence whereas there are large number of people leading a life of abject poverty. Innocent people are killed including women and children, for no fault of theirs. In India, there is a common belief that we are all children of one God and that mankind is one big family. In fact, all religions teach love and cooperation and uphold the message of universal brotherhood. Let us live up to this ideal and put it into practice. If we have any differences, we should try to resolve them through peaceful means. And I think that an institution like that of *Brahma Kumaris*, which is run mainly by sisters and which is based on total non-violence, can play a major role in this. I am happy to associate myself with your work because in your ideology and principles, hatred and violence have no place. You ask people to look upon each other as brothers and to remember one God as the loving Father of mankind.

While talking about the youth, I would like to touch upon one more point. Today, nearly half of our population consists of youth. If youth can be made to give up the path of violence and the use of tobacco, alcohol and other intoxicating drugs, a great step would have been taken towards national reconstruction. The energies of youth could be channelled into constructive activities like village upliftment through a constructive programme. Youth should not allow themselves to be misguided by vested interests and strive to live up to the ideals with steadfast devotion.

Another thing which I find here is an atmosphere of self-discipline and spiritual study. One always notices that sisters and brothers here are very happy and there is a smile on their faces. This is a real sign of spiritual strivings. I feel very happy to note that *Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya* puts more emphasis on character and moral values rather than on rituals and dogma.

I would like to point out that there is great necessity for meditation and moral values today. The atmosphere is full of stress and tension everywhere. In the big, industrialised cities there is so much din and dust. It is a matter of pain to see humanism taking a back seat in the society. The rising tempo of economic activity and industrialisation is bound to create more and more problems in the society. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to devise programmes for inculcating self-discipline through eternal values like truth, peace, non-violence and



selfless service. Benefits from science and civilisation can be enjoyed only when these eternal values guide the actions of society. I think that holding spiritual congregations like this with people of all communities, classes, castes, cultures and languages participating and mixing with each other like members of a vast family, is the real need of the hour. I find people from all states speaking diverse languages, professing different faiths are together as one. This is the true spirit of spiritualism, being propagated by *Brahma Kumaris*. I appreciate their efforts for creating unity, solidarity and a spirit of reconciliation and harmony.

Once again, I express my happiness to be here and I heartily thank you for inviting me to this divine institution. With this, I declare the Youth Festival open. I wish you all success in your efforts.

## Spiritual Oneness

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today and to associate myself with this function. I accepted readily to come here when the Chancellor Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma invited me, as yoga is very dear to me. I would like to congratulate the Andhra University for taking initiative in launching this Institute.

The common basis of all faiths in the world is the spiritual oneness of humankind and that the same divinity is manifested everywhere. A knowledge of this divine manifestation and realisation of this eternal truth will pave way for universal peace and brotherhood. Yoga means union, union of individual soul with the universal or supreme soul. The interest in yoga arises in us only if we are conscious of the basic truth of oneness of divinity amidst diversity.

The science of yoga, as it is well known, is meant to teach us and take us step by step to the ultimate realisation or consciousness of the unity between individual soul and supreme soul. India is fortunate as a large number of *Gurus*, *Acharyas*, Saints, *Avatars* and *Rishis* have given us immense and precious knowledge on this subject. Many people talk of various paths to reach the ultimate stage of consciousness. The essence of all such paths is the same; they supplement each other, but not contradict each other. The human body, as the highest form of evolution, is ideally suited to pursue this spiritual path. In theory, it is said that the pure conscious part of the mind may be called the spiritual part and its objectivity aspect the material part. All human endeavours and efforts manifest themselves as the movement of thought, of mind and of the senses.

This movement of thought is followed by movement of psychosis; the body moves accordingly producing corresponding enjoyment or suffering. It is for all of us to exert ourselves for good and to withdraw our minds from evil through free will and endeavour. The science of yoga helps us to strive in this direction. Yoga is much more than a physical exercise; it is a spiritual path. Now a days Yoga is gaining more popularity in the economically advanced developed

countries. I feel that this training will do good to every one. It helps students to develop concentration and devotion and improves their efficiency in learning.

With these few words, I thank the Chancellor of the University Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma for inviting me here today.

## Bringers of Life

IT IS A matter of great pleasure for me to be here and to associate myself with this function. I am glad to observe that in recognition of the importance of the nursing profession to the community at large, national awards are given annually to Nurses, Lady Health Visitors and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives who have distinguished themselves in the performance of their duties. The institution of these awards for honouring the noble profession of nursing is a commendable step in the right direction and I compliment the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for this.

On this day, when we are bestowing honour on this noble profession for dedicated, humane services to mankind, one is reminded of Florence Nightingale, affectionately known by all whom she served as "Lady with the Lamp". The courage, devotion and dedication with which she brought this profession to its present status is well recorded in history. Following her noble example, there have been many others who have rendered selfless service to mankind. We are grateful to all of them.

In a world in which four-fifth of the population has no access to any permanent form of health care and in which millions more are disenchanted with the service provided by conventional health systems, primary health care is the key to achieve an acceptable level of health for all. The international conference on Primary Health Care held at Alma Ata in the USSR in 1978 drew up the fundamental principles of this far reaching concept and embodied them in the Declaration of Alma Ata. Emphasis was laid that health, which is a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, is a fundamental human right and that attainment of the highest possible level of health is the most important world wide social goal. The problem and protection of the health of the people is essential to sustained economic and social development and contributes to the better quality of life.

The primary health care concept assigns a special responsibility to

the nursing profession. Through the ages and with the advancement of medical and scientific technology, the concept and functions of nursing have undergone vast changes. There is still scope to expand the role and functions of the nursing personnel in accordance with the needs of the times. Primary Health Care means passing from highly specialised, complicated, magnified curative care requiring highest level of technical skill and competence to a system of health care which would give priority to simple basic care, care for maintaining life as well as preventing illness through simple curative measures. In other words, it would require change in the attitude and aptitude of the recipient of care and the provider of care. This implies that changes have to be brought about in educational programmes for all categories of health professionals. Health information and education should form part and parcel of all health care services. Efforts should be made to secure complete integration of all plans for health and human development with the overall national socio-economic development process, specially with the more closely related sectors like food production, social welfare, water supply and sanitation.

Special emphasis should also be laid on integrating the best of every system of medicine like *Ayurveda*, *Yunani*, Homeopathy for the benefit of mankind. The nursing profession has to think of incorporating simple home medicines for the welfare of the community. Nurses should take up the challenge of sharing health care responsibilities for millions. I have no doubt that the nursing profession can meet this challenge as the profession is known for its dedication and selfless service to humanity. A nurse apart from being an aide to the doctor has an independent role to play. It is the nurse who is with the patient round the clock and brings life and happiness to the patient and family with her personal care. Nurses by the very nature of their work are the natural health care providers. The combination of professional skill and human approach will make all the difference in the larger context of social wellbeing.

I hold the nursing profession in high esteem and have great admiration for its members. It is the motherly instinct that makes it the most noble and humane profession. Selfless service and spirit of sacrifice distinguish this profession from others. It is gratifying that social prejudice regarding this profession is gradually disappearing and the community has started recognising the services rendered by the nurses. I am glad that due recognition is given to all categories of nursing personnel i.e., Nurses, Lady Health Visitors and Auxiliary

Nurse Midwives. I congratulate all the awardees for their meritorious services in the field of nursing and their selfless devotion to duty.

I thank the Minister of Health for inviting me here.

## Children of Nature

I AM VERY happy to be here today and to lay the foundation stone of the Tribal Research Centre's building. There are tribal research institutions in many States now. I remember that the first tribal research institution was set up at Bhubaneswar in Orissa as far back as in 1953. What is interesting about your Research Centre is that it is being set up within the framework of Tamil University. That it will enjoy academic atmosphere, like the one in Gujarat set up by the Gujarat Vidyapith. I congratulate the Tamil University for their initiative in starting this Centre in this area where we have some of the tribes known throughout the world like the *Todas*, the *Kotas* and the *Kurumbas*.

It is also a matter of great satisfaction that Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi has been systematically visiting the tribal areas and emphasised the government's commitment in improving the lot of the tribals.

The tribals in our country have many common features. Living mostly in natural surroundings they lead simple life. They are nicer people and are the children of nature. Their simplicity is sometimes exploited by the clever people. Funds for their development are diverted. It is generally agreed that the development programmes and schemes for the welfare of tribals should have different orientation than the programme followed elsewhere. It has been seen that the officers and staff implementing these projects do not always have dedication, necessary knowledge and initiation. Therefore the development of tribal people is lagging behind and their basic problems like ignorance and exploitation have not been fully solved. In this context, I feel happy to note that one of the aims of this Tribal Research Centre is to train officials engaged in tribal development projects. Humility and selfless service is very essential. Sometimes non-tribal people adopt a very patronising approach towards poor people and particularly the tribals. Development of tribal people, as a result has not shown desired results. Therefore, it is highly necessary

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Speech on laying foundation stone of the Tribal Research Centre's Building, Udhagamandalam, September 11, 1985

for the people working in tribal areas to be fully trained to deal with the problems of tribal people. I am happy to know that this Centre has in a short time taken up a study of tribal development in the four States of South India and that very useful material has been collected.

It is good to know that this Centre is working as an independent agency, for assessing the developmental activities for tribals which will provide guidelines for new approaches. The Centre has come up very well since its inception in October, 1983. With the completion of this building, the Centre will be in a better position to step up its activities. I wish the Centre a constructive future in the service of the tribals.



## A Unique Island

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here in this Island of Minicoy, famous for its unique features and to associate myself with the water supply scheme. This Island of Minicoy is famous for its seafarers, its old light house, tuna fishing, and above all for the special status women enjoy here. I am told that it was because of the special status of women that this Island was referred to as the "female" island by ancient traveller Marco Polo. Ibn Batuta, another ancient traveller, had also visited this island and lived here for a few days. I have visited other islands during the last couple of days and acquainted myself with the problems and welfare of people. The Lakshadweep territory with its many islands have made considerable progress since Independence and I am sure that the tempo of economic development will further accelerate in the current Seventh Five Year Plan period.

I have felt that there is an urgent need to pay special attention to the problems of providing drinking water in all the islands. This decade between the years 1981-1990 has been designated as the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade and as such the water supply schemes have assumed special importance. This water supply scheme in Minicoy for which I have come to lay the foundation, is part of an overall scheme to provide drinking water in all the islands, estimated to cost about rupees three crores. The whole scheme has been devised after taking into consideration the peculiar problems relating to the ground water level in small islands like this. I am sure that the needs of the island for drinking water will be met successfully with the completion of the scheme.

There is a great potential for tourism in these islands. I am told that the number of tourists has been increasing in recent years, as a result of the promotional activities undertaken by the Society for Promotion of Recreational Tourism. I am sure that with further development in transport, communications and other infrastructure, tourism will make rapid progress and provide more employment opportunities to people. Package tours from mainland to these islands will no doubt

help in giving a fillip and in bringing people closer to each other. I see bright future for the people of Minicoy as well as other islands. The current Seventh Five Year Plan envisages a massive outlay of about Rs. 44 crores for these islands, more than the entire outlay so far since the inception of planning.

Before concluding I thank the Lakshadweep Administration for inviting me here. I will cherish the pleasant memories of my visit here.

## Fighting Disability

I AM VERY happy to be present in your midst today to give the National Awards for Handicapped Welfare. I would like to congratulate all the recipients of the awards which include the employees, the employers of the handicapped, placement officers and voluntary agencies for their excellent performance and valuable contributions. All of them deserve our appreciation and encouragement. I understand that these National Awards were instituted to encourage organisations, both Government and private, to employ handicapped people. I am happy to find that a large number of private organisations are extremely sympathetic to the cause of the handicapped and have started employing them. However, we would have liked to see more of private sector employment for these disadvantaged sections of our population. We expect much greater initiative from the private sector in this connection.

The Minister of Welfare has mentioned some of the measures already taken for improving employment opportunities. It would be best if handicap could be prevented. A major programme of immunisation against various crippling diseases is already on. So far I understand only 17 per cent of the new born are immunised against polio every year and the number remaining without immunisation is hence very large. Programmes of supplementary nutrition to prevent diseases caused by malnutrition should cover all the underprivileged children. Our programmes of pre-natal and maternity care are being expanded to cover all expecting mothers. Within the limitation of resources very impressive steps are already being taken.

The voluntary sector has always played a predominant role in the welfare and rehabilitation of the handicapped population. They are headed by dedicated individuals committed to the cause they serve. They are always more flexible and pragmatic in their approach to the problems of handicapped persons than government institutions. They are more sensitive and responsive to their specific needs. I am happy to find that voluntary organisations and voluntary workers are recipients of National Awards today.

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Speech at the presentation of National Awards for Handicapped Welfare at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, April 5, 1986

However, I find that voluntary organisations are limiting their activities to major urban areas in a few States in the country. They also do not reach out the rural population who are more in need of their services. Another surprising feature of their activity is that in providing employment opportunities to the disabled population they continue to think of only traditional occupations like chair caning, candle making and tailoring. Even for the able-bodied the traditional sectors of our economy do not offer adequate employment opportunities. For the handicapped who have less opportunities for acquiring education and skills, these traditional sectors of employment are less accessible. The bulk of employment even for the able-bodied is in the non-formal sectors of the economy ranging from petty shops to service units and agricultural occupations to self-employment ventures. We should tap the vast unorganised sectors of the economy for increasing their employment opportunities.

The Welfare Minister has mentioned that the social attitudes of the community hinder the rehabilitation of the handicapped much more than their impairments. Even the attitude of the family is governed by social norms and unless the society itself sheds prejudices against them it is difficult to expect even the family to be sympathetic towards its handicapped members. The mass media can help in removal of these prejudices to a great extent. We could use the television and the radio effectively for this purpose. They are doing some thing but the mass media is not yet fully utilised towards this end. I would be happy to see greater utilisation of our TV and radio net-work to inform and educate the public and modify the social attitudes in the community.

Ours is not a country with large resources like many other developed countries. As a consequence of poverty, malnutrition etc. the incidence of handicap is much larger in our country. The fight against poverty, disease, malnutrition and disability has to be carried on with the help of social awareness and participation by all the people in this struggle. Advances in immunisation and new technology has to be used to reduce the incidence of the disease and to improve opportunities for rehabilitation. With good training and guidance the voluntary agencies should come forward in this task and private institutions should participate in programmes of rehabilitation of the handicapped.

May I once again congratulate the Award recipients for their excellent performance.

## Child—Our Future

I FEEL HAPPY to be here today to honour those who have rendered distinguished service to help promote the balanced growth of the children of our country. The welfare and growth of children are so dear to my heart that I take particular pleasure in participating in this function.

In the words of Vivekananda, one may seek God through service to mankind. One may as well add that the best way to serve mankind is through service to children. If a society neglects its children, many will be lost before they reach adulthood and many may remain less developed in body and mind thereby being deprived of their right to make a constructive contribution to society.

On a former occasion while presenting the National Awards for Child Welfare, I spoke of the need to increase the number of awards. I am glad that this suggestion has found acceptance in the Department of Women and Child Development. Today, I see the emergence of a much larger number of individuals and institutions dedicating themselves in the service of our young children and serving our very large child population in areas where such service is badly needed.

The focus on the development of children is, somewhat a recent phenomenon. For this, the country is grateful to the late Prime Minister who was the guiding spirit in the evolution of the National Policy for Children. She was also the first President of the National Children's Board that has been functioning to recall the words of the National Policy for Children as a focus and a forum for planning and review, and proper coordination of the multiplicity of services striving to meet the needs of children.

The goal under the National Policy for Children is to ensure that "within a reasonable time, all children in the country enjoy optimum conditions for their balanced growth".

The National Policy for Children envisages that voluntary organisations engaged in the field of child welfare should develop either on their own or with State assistance, in the field of education,

health, recreation and social welfare services. The system of National Awards aims at according recognition to voluntary work in the field of child welfare. Recognition by itself will not promote voluntary work. State assistance can certainly be a factor to promote its growth. My appeal, therefore, is to all good men in the country, who have the cause of the child at heart, to devote a part of their energy, time and resources to help the children and thus contribute to the national cause. My appeal to the State is that they may come out with larger assistance and larger help to promote voluntary action for the cause of the child.

The recognition and honour that is going to the institutions and individuals in the form of awards, also goes to the people whose support has made possible the work of these individuals and institutions. I am also sure that these individuals and institutions have received much more honour and recognition in the communities that they have been serving. It is, in fact, this community recognition and support that sustain voluntary action.

The significance of the State recognition is thus not solely that it is accorded to the Awardees here. The real significance and relevance lies in the honour and recognition that is accorded through these National Awards to many in remote and farflung parts of the country, whose services for children have not yet come sufficiently to the notice of the State.

In our country, we are often apt to reduce a cause to a ritual. We have to take care that the cause of the child is not reduced to a day's celebration on the Universal Children's Day or on the day of presentation of National Awards for Child Welfare. This noble work should continue on a sustained basis and maximum cooperation of the people should be mobilised for the purpose.

I wish your endeavour all success.

## Outlets and Opportunities

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here with all of you and to inaugurate the National Youth Folk Festival which, I understand, is the first of its kind being organised in the country on such a large scale. The most satisfying aspect of the festival is that it is mainly for the rural youth who have generally remained deprived of opportunities to show their talents in such big gatherings.

India's traditions, with all their richness and variety, have developed in India's villages. Hence, it is in the fitness of things that this festival has provided an outlet and opportunity for the rural youth to display their traditions, customs and talents, learn from each other and to further enrich our composite culture. The soul of India lives in its villages and the majority of Indian youth are rural youth. They have a distinct personality of their own and have their own values, responses, attitudes, aspirations and perceptions. Their style of life, pattern of dress, tone of language and approaches to problems and issues have shaped the image of the country over the years. It has, therefore, been felt necessary for quite sometime to provide increasing opportunities to the rural youth to develop their personality and to contribute towards national development.

Ours is a vast country with continental dimensions and diversities. This sheer vastness has given birth to a number of variations and varieties. But we have developed a social fabric which has a lasting tradition of understanding and appreciation of diversity in customs, cultures, norms, values, symbols and belief systems. Your participation in this festival from different places having different modes of living, cultures and traditions bears testimony to the fact that we all appreciate the rich variety of the country, its varied systems and yet a basic oneness which has engendered amongst us a pride in being an Indian.

Indian culture has evolved from changes it has undergone throughout history in the context of changing social and economic conditions and contacts with other cultures. Different cultures have

developed in various parts of the country with their own distinctive features. The cultures of all the regions have interacted with each other and all have contributed to the continuous evolution of the culture of the country as a whole. The richness of Indian culture is its variety in art, architecture, languages, literature, religions, beliefs and customs. An appreciation of the country's cultural heritage, therefore, implies an appreciation of and pride in its variety and diversity. Such appreciation has always encouraged respect for people belonging to different faiths, regions and language groups who have contributed to the richness of India's heritage and for the bonds that unite the people of the country.

We have to realise that the country's social and economic progress depends on cooperation of all people and balanced development. We have also to appreciate the economic inter-dependence of different parts of the country and several common problems that the nation faces in various fields such as self-sufficiency in food, improvement in health, multiplying employment opportunities, the spread of education and population growth. We must also realise that cooperation and effort of every citizen of India is essential for attainment of ideals enshrined in our constitution such as democracy, secularism, social justice and welfare of the people.

The year 1985 was observed as the International Youth Year with the Motto: "Participation, Development and Peace". In India, the year was observed, inter-alia, as the year of consultation with young people. A series of conferences and seminars were organised at district, state and national levels to know of the problems of young persons and their possible solutions. I am sure that there have been many durable gains to young persons as a result of observation of the Youth Year. The 12th of January every year will be observed as the National Youth Day and the week where special emphasis on youth programmes will be put throughout the country every year in future. The National Youth Emblem has been proclaimed as a continuing symbol for the youth of the country to be used whenever youth activities take place. A National Youth award scheme has been launched by the Government which will recognise outstanding social work done by young persons in the shape of annual awards. The National Games have been revived. The greatest and the most durable gain of observance of Youth Year has been of course, the focussing of attention on the situation of the youth and recognition of their role as participating members of the society.



The government is keen to ensure that benefit of various schemes is extended to as large a number of rural youth as possible. For this purpose, more than 210 districts have already been covered by Nehru Yuva Kendras during the current plan. The remaining districts in the country will also be having Nehru Yuva Kendras by the end of the current plan. A scheme for providing training in various fields through specialised institutes have been started mainly for rural youth so that they could become self-employed or better employed. A scheme for financial assistance for setting up of youth clubs has also been started.

The International Youth Year formally ended on December 31, 1985. We must not, however, consider it merely as a commemorative event. Our emphasis should instead, be on deriving durable benefits for young people from the Year. It is hoped that observance of Youth Year would lead to intensification of existing youth programmes and devising of new and meaningful programmes which could benefit young people on a long term basis. The general approach to an integrated strategy for youth programmes need to be considered in a wider perspective than the educational system because the problems of youth relate to more profound and broader issues like personality development, transition from childhood into adulthood, gainful employment, suitable development of their spirit of adventure, provision of opportunities for community service and above all a closer and deeper understanding of the cultural values and heritage of the country to live in symbiosis with the scientific and technical advancement of India in future. In a developing world, there is an increasing danger of the invasion of ideas and value systems from outside which could weaken their own cultural roots. This danger is particularly increasing with the revolution in media. A concerted effort is required to ensure that our cultural identities remain intact even while we move towards modernity.

You, my young friends, have unlimited qualities and potential. As Swami Vivekananda said:

“Everything else will be ready; but strong, vigorous, believing youngmen sincere to the backbone are wanted. A hundred such and the world gets revolutionised.”

While not taking much of your time, I would conclude with the hope that you will continue involving yourself in tasks aimed at making a modern and strong India so that our country could be looked upon as a model of youthful endeavour in national reconstruction. I offer my felicitation to all on this occasion.

## Foster Sports Culture

I AM HAPPY to be amidst you all—distinguished sportspersons and sports lovers—for honouring our outstanding sportsmen and women who have won Arjuna Awards for 1983 and 1984 by their outstanding performance. They have excelled in different disciplines of sport and set examples for others in the field of competition as well as in the matter of discipline, sportsmanship and comraderie. I congratulate the Award winners for their achievements.

We are making planned efforts since Independence to harness our resources and to achieve all-round development of our country. Harnessing of human resources is an integral part of development. It is essential to improve human resources by upgrading the all-round quality of the individual so that his contribution to our development is maximised. A fully developed individual with an integrated personality can contribute to development meaningfully for which education as well as physical fitness are essential. A strong nation must have citizens who are physically strong. It has been recognised that it is necessary to promote sports in the country in a massive way as they play a major role.

There is also need to lay stress on improving our sports standards so that the country's presence is felt in the world of sport. In order, therefore, to have a large number of people in the country performing at high standards in sports, it is necessary to carry sports and games to every town, every village and indeed to every home. Mass participation in sports therefore, is a must not only for the health, fitness and strength of the nation, but also for raising our sports standards. Minimum sports facilities such as playfields, indoor halls etc. need to be provided in villages and towns for the people at large and, at the same time, sports consciousness created among them so that, once the sports facilities have become available, the people feel motivated to put them to use. I am happy to note that IX Asian Games held in Delhi have had a positive effect in making people sports conscious. A lot more, however, needs to be done and we should

ensure that sports and sports consciousness become a part of our educational system. Given the basic facilities and sports consciousness, I am sure that we can become a nation of sports.

While we are busy building the edifice of sports in the country, we have also to see that the existing sports facilities are not wasted but are rather utilised fully. It is absolutely necessary to preserve the existing playfields whether in educational institutions or in public places so that the new generation of children and young people is not denied their use as playfields. There is intense pressure of population in our country and a great deal of determination is needed to preserve and develop our play standards.

The Union and State Governments have a lot to do to promote sports so that it becomes way of life with us. It must, be realised that sport is basically a voluntary activity. Unless a person himself wants to participate in sport, no amount of facilities or incentives are going to get him to play. Voluntary effort and voluntary organisations, therefore, have a major role in the promotion of sport in the country. It is for them to create a climate where people voluntarily take to sport as a healthy means of recreation. As, in other spheres of voluntary effort, the public institutions can only be expected to buttress and support voluntary effort. It is, therefore, necessary that the National Sports Federations, State associations and local clubs, which all embody voluntary effort in the field of sport, should become active in increasing the number of people involved in active sport. Similarly, the local bodies like the panchayats and panchayat samitis in the rural areas, and the municipalities and city corporations in urban areas, should attach due importance to the improvement of the health and fitness of their constituents through sports activities. Sport is not merely a recreational activity but it has also great social significance. It is through sports that people of different castes, creeds and age come together in a spirit of healthy competition and forget everything except that they are sportsmen and women. Sport is thus a great promoter of social harmony and this significant aspect needs to be recognised adequately. The National Games held in November 1985 is a step in the right direction which promote unity in the country.

I am happy to note that as many as twelve Arjuna awardees for 1983 and 1984 are women. It is widely known that the foundation of any achievement in later life is laid in home during childhood, which holds good in the field of sports also. Therefore, it is all the more necessary for more and more women and girls to take part in sport activities. It

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will provide a background for the future generation whose foundation is laid by the mother in the home. At present, the number of girls that take part in sport and physical activities in the country is small compared to boys. I hope that soon the day will come when women and girls will account for half of the persons taking active part in sport activities.

In the past, Universities and colleges used to provide a substantial proportion of our national level sports persons. Sports culture in institutions of higher education needs to be promoted in a systematic basis. Sports facilities that already exist in the universities and colleges should be utilised fully and student community should be encouraged to improve their physical fitness by participating in sports activities as a means of a healthy recreation. Sport, which can lay the foundation of a healthy and fit existence throughout life should not be neglected. All right thinking people particularly educationists, media people and public men should all combine their efforts, to foster and develop sports culture in universities and colleges. Universities should be the training ground not only of our intellectuals and professionals but also of great sportsmen and women. The efforts made by the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar have to be commended and they deserve special congratulations for winning the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy for excellence among the universities in the field of sports for both the years. This is the first successive year for the Guru Nanak Dev University to achieve this which deserve praise.

Once again, I congratulate all those who have won Arjuna Awards for the years 1983 and 1984 and have joined that select band of sportsmen and women who earlier won these awards. May this trend of increasing excellence in sports go on. I wish you all success and hope that more people will win their awards in future.

## Serve Underprivileged

**I** AM HAPPY to be here today on the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of your Diocese of Kottayam. Ever since the Diocese was founded by the saintly Pope St. Pius X of happy memory, I understand, you have been progressing steadily and helping others to progress in all spheres of life; spiritual, social, cultural and economic.

Keeping with the same trend, I am glad to know, you are observing this Jubilee Year with promoting the quality of life of the people around you, especially of the less privileged, by building houses for the homeless by providing land for the landless, by helping the poor girls with marriage subsidies and other acts of welfare. I am sure that these activities will make the people more patriotic citizens and at the same time to be faithful followers of their religion. It will no doubt create in the minds of the people, especially the youth, an awareness against the social evils such as dishonesty, drug addiction, laziness etc.

The future of any nation depends on its young men and women. First of all our younger people have to be inspired with the basic values of honesty, integrity, good behaviour and discipline. They have to be told of our rich cultural heritage and the principles of tolerance, respect for elders, comradeship and a desire for hard work.

I am happy to learn that the Diocese encourages diverse activities including art and sports festivals. This, I am sure, will be helpful in promoting all-round growth of the personality of our children and the youth. Our nation consists of people speaking various languages and professing different religions. There is great diversity in the matter of food, dress, music, dance forms and handicrafts etc. There is also diversity of geographical conditions. All this diversity makes for a highly colourful and rich culture. Under all these variations there has been a strong current of unity and oneness. I understand the Diocese of Kottayam has about one lakh, twenty thousand members. Though you are a small community in this great nation, yet, I understand, your contributions in the field of education, health care and services to the poor and the under-privileged have been very large. I appreciate the



significant services your community has been rendering to the development of the country.

A large number of people of your community are engaged in agriculture and a good number earn their living by industries of different kinds. I have a feeling that smaller communities contribute more to the development of the nation, because they have a deep desire to do greater things and make greater progress than others. By this token, I am sure, you are exerting your energies in the service of the nation. Howsoever small a community may be, it has a right to retain its social identity, remaining in the nation's mainstream.

I am told that the Knanaya community traces its origin from a christian colony that migrated into India in the fourth century A.D. I am happy that you have integrated yourselves so well into the mainstream of the Indian society. I am sure, you will pursue the same path towards the common goal of leading our nation to greater prosperity.

The foremost thing for achieving prosperity is peace. There should be peace within the country as well as peace in the world. Any kind of disturbance within our borders, weakens us socially and economically. If there is danger on our borders, that diverts our attention from progress and we have to utilise our resources for defending ourselves. India is desirous for peace everywhere. We believe in a just international economic order. India believes in equality of every independent nation and non-interference in the affairs of one another.

It is very important that the people of this great country follow the principles of secularism, socialism and democracy for greater progress and enduring peace within our nation. Communities like you can play a significant role in this direction by your own example.

I heartily thank the Bishop of Kottayam for inviting me to participate in this celebration. I shall cherish the warm hospitality and cordial welcome extended to me by the people of Kottayam. With these few words I inaugurate this solemn public meeting.

## Religion : Our Inner Strength

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today to participate in the first centenary celebrations of the Arch-diocese of Verapoly. It is the first Arch-diocese in Kerala and one of the six in India.

The Arch-diocese deserves to be congratulated for gaining paramount importance in the history of the Catholic Church in India and for the important role it played in shaping the destinies of the Church in Kerala. It is well known that Christianity came here long ago with the arrival of St. Thomas, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ. Many joined him and thus the first Church in India was formed in Kerala, which grew steadily over the centuries.

Christianity is a religion of God and service to humanity. It teaches universal brotherhood, charity and compassion. It lays stress on help and succour to the poor, the sick, the widows and the orphans. It propagates the gentle principles of forgiveness and mercy. This noble religion believes in the kingdom of God and the spirit of tolerance.

It teaches love to one's enemies. Christianity in India contributed a great deal in moulding the ethos of this country. It played a pioneering role in the modern, technical education. Christian societies took initiative in opening schools at a number of places, which helped our people acquire knowledge in various fields.

Christian intellectuals fostered a pragmatic outlook, brought fine architecture to this country and introduced modern scientific methods in agriculture and other occupations. Libraries, printing presses and publishing houses were also set up.

Christian organisations have also been very active in social service. People of the country will always remember with gratitude the services rendered by Mother Teresa, who can be called an angel of mercy. The Christian social endeavour aims at alleviating the sufferings of all irrespective of religion, caste, creed and colour.

Mahatma Gandhi was profoundly influenced by Christianity. No wonder that some people have called Gandhiji "The greatest Christian

of them all". Gandhiji shared the principles of uplifting the downtrodden and respect for women with the Christian concepts.

Indian christians were deeply involved in our national struggle for independence. In free India, Christians have been holding high offices both in Civil and Defence organisations and have prospered in many fields. India is a mosaic of many religions and everyone has a right to profess and propagate his faith freely in this secular and democratic state.

Christians are a part and parcel of our great nation and alongwith others they enjoy equal opportunities of advancement and development.

Every Indian participates in the spirit of joy at Christian festivals, as Christians take part in the festivities of other communities in the country. These common bonds of brotherhood make for the cultural unity of our motherland.

Religion should be a unifying force in our diverse society. But in some parts of our country, religion is used for disruptive purposes. This should never be allowed and everything should be done to preserve and promote the unity of the people and integrity of the country. Some self-seeking persons tend to exploit religion to achieve their selfish ends.

Our Constitution guarantees enough freedom to the people to engage in political activity within the democratic frame-work. Nothing should be done beyond the guarantees given in the Constitution, which was framed by its founding fathers after great care and deliberations.

We have also to remember the importance of discipline and character building. We have to inculcate in our youths the qualities of self-respect, self-reliance and a dynamic outlook. We have to save our young men and women from evils like drug addiction.

We have to engender in the society, qualities of good citizenship. The Church, I am sure, can play a very useful role in the achievement of such objectives. In fact, all social and religious organisations should pay particular attention to these aspects, if we want to ensure the welfare and well-being of our people.

I have been told that Bishop Angelo Francis of Malabar composed the first ever grammer for the Malayalam vernacular language in 1709. Similarly the Malayalam script was first printed with the efforts of your missionaries of Verapoly. In 1876 you were able to start a bi-monthly journal. This is, perhaps, the oldest Malayalam paper in Kerala.

I have also learnt of the great contributions of Archbishop Dr. Joseph Attipethy. He built four first-grade University Colleges, from which people of all communities have benefited. He also built up four major hospitals at various centres.

Whereas these institutions speak of the missionary zeal of that pioneering spirit, these are the living examples of Christian concept of service to humanity. I am sure, the present Archbishop Dr. Joseph Kelanthara is carrying on the torch of his predecessors. Religious leaders have a special place in our society. They are highly respected and are looked upon as teachers and guides.

It is the responsibility of these leaders to give a direction to society to strengthen the forces of ethics and morality, to instil a spirit of brotherhood among people and to create an ethos of tolerance, peace and goodwill among all sections.

I do hope your Arch-diocese will continue to play a noble part in this direction. I give my best wishes to the Arch-diocese of Verapoly and all people of Kerala.

I am certain you will march from strength to strength and help create an environment in which all of us can achieve nobler goals.

## A Social Crusader

LATE SHRI E.V. RAMASWAMY Naicker is a household name in the southern part of our country, especially in Tamil Nadu.

Periyar Ramaswamy was a social crusader. He believed in human equality and dignity of every individual without consideration of caste, creed and colour. He struggled for removal of disparities in social life. He raised his voice in a powerful manner against untouchability. His role in the Vaikom Satyagraha in the princely State of Travancore Cochin in 1925, is too well known. He was able to get the right for the people of the so called low castes to use the roads in the vicinity of the temple.

In this struggle he received the whole-hearted cooperation of Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders like Shri Keshav Menon. The success in the Satyagraha earned Shri Ramaswamy the title of "Vaikom Hero".

Shri Ramaswamy tried to bring about many social reforms in society. He believed in simple marriages without much cost or fanfare. He also pleaded for inter-caste marriages and the widow remarriage. It is noteworthy that he was the President of the then Madras Congress committee in 1922. After resigning from the Congress Party, he founded a "Self-respect Movement" in 1925. He became the President of this socio-political organisation. Later, he formed Dravida Kazhagam. Up to the end of his life, the Periyar remained its President.

Shri Ramaswamy was concerned about the poor and the down-trodden. He gave a call for reservations for backward classes in Government services. Periyar Ramaswamy combined the qualities of a social reformer, a true friend of the poor, a simple and honest man, a popular leader, and an earnest and warm hearted person. He was against superstition and unnecessary rituals.

In recognition of his eminence as a public leader, the Government of India issued a commemorative postage stamp in his honour. As we observe his birth anniversary today, we remember his qualities as a

great human being an independent thinker and reformer, who dedicated long years of his life to the welfare of the depressed people. He believed in creating a society free of discrimination and exploitation.

## Status of Women

I AM GLAD to be associated with the All India Women Lawyer's Conference organised by the Bar Council of India and the Bar Council of India Trust during the Silver Jubilee Year of the Bar Council.

Women form nearly half the world population. In India too they are slightly less than the male population. As such they should have been the equal partners in the determination of our national destiny. In a family the contribution of woman is much more than that of a man, irrespective of the fact that a male generally assumes the task of the bread winner and considers himself the supporter and protector of his wife and children. But the very fact that it is the woman who begets and looks after the children and takes care of the needs and comforts of the whole family, it becomes obvious that the woman plays a major part in the family life.

It was in the 15th century that the founder of the Sikh faith, Guru Nanak raised his voice to uphold the dignity and honour of the womenfolk. He said that it is woman who gives us birth and it is a woman to whom the man is joined in wedlock. A man cherishes the company of a woman and forges close ties with her. Why to talk ill of woman, who gives birth to kings, sages and seers. Several other reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Dayanand Saraswati made valuable contributions to improve the lot of women.

After attaining independence, the fathers of India's Constitution showed remarkable awareness about the plight of women and tried to give a fair deal to them in the Fundamental Rights. There is a galaxy of eminent lawyers in this august gathering, and therefore, I do not wish to recapitulate the various provisions conferring an honourable status on women enshrined in our Constitution. Even the new chapter dealing with Fundamental Duties provides that it is the duty of every citizen of India to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

In spite of religious epithets, reform movements and valuable contributions of courts of law in our country in giving judgements in

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Speech at the inauguration of the All India Women Lawyer's Conference, New Delhi, November 11, 1986

cases relating to women, it has not been possible for the fair sex to enjoy equal status with men. The psyche of most of our people is, perhaps, too deep rooted in tradition and despite modern education and the role of mass media, women by and large continue to be relegated to a second place.

Discrimination against a female starts even before her birth, thanks to the sophisticated medical methods, which can determine ante-natal sex resulting in the possible abortion of a female foetus. In almost every field woman is at a disadvantage, be it nutrition, education, marriage, divorce and employment. Though from time to time laws have been framed to do away with disparities and discriminations, in actual practice, women are known to have been suffering from inequities and injustices.

Dowry still remains a curse on the society. The law against dowry, unless enforced stringently, will be of little avail. It is a matter of pride and pleasure for the rich and the affluent to spend lavishly on marriages of their daughters, which in fact increases the avarice of the groom and his family. One often hears of deaths of newly married women in kitchens when their clothes accidentally catch fire from the stove or gas oven. One wonders how the elderly woman in the family remain immune from such accidents and why is it only the newly-wed young girls who fall victims to the wrath of firegods. The society must introspect and get rid of the curse of dowry system. But in case of such deaths, inquiry should not be conducted by an officer below the rank of a Deputy Superintendent of Police and the body of the victims should not be allowed to be cremated without the presence of the parents of the woman. Even the post-mortem should be conducted by two expert medical men. It is ironical that a woman does not necessarily suffer mentally and physically at the hands of her husband. In most cases it is another woman who becomes the cause of problems and prejudices against her. Lady lawyers and others could, perhaps, take it on themselves to educate women, especially in our rural areas to eschew discrimination against their own tribe and adopt a generous and a healthy attitude to the daughters-in-law and sisters-in-law.

Though the age of marriage for girls and boys has been raised by law, in some parts of our country, this provision is being observed more in violation. It is very strange that in this nuclear age, one hears of the inhuman custom of *sati* being committed in some remote corner of this ancient land.

It is praiseworthy that facilities for Medical Termination of Prenancy in cases of unwanted conceptions are freely provided, but



however, to hand down deterrent punishment to the perpetrators of crimes against women. I would like the woman power to grow to attain a better status in our social system. The attitude of lawyers and the judiciary will greatly determine the development of this power.

With these words I inaugurate the All India Womens' Conference.

## A Friend in Need

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be amidst you once again for the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Association. The printed reports enriched further by the salient features highlighted by Shri Narasimha Rao, Chairman of the twin organisations makes an impressive account of the work done by these two organisations and thousands of their volunteers. I take this opportunity to congratulate each one of them, particularly those who have won medals and shields. I am sure those who are not in the run this year will do their best and compete for the first place for the next year.

It has been my privilege to follow the work of these organisations closely and I appreciate very much their concern for victims of distress and disaster, may it be the drought, the floods, fire, epidemic and the catastrophe that followed the Bhopal gas leakage. It is heartening to learn that Red Cross amongst the first to reach the gas victims and arranged milk for 20,000 beneficiaries. The initial phase is over but the emergency continues; the Red Cross also continues to meet a part of the problems created by the gas leakage by providing medical coverage, health protection programme and many other directly related services.

Equally satisfying was the role of the volunteers of the St. John Ambulance the first one to reach the troubled spot in Kumbh Mela, to carry the injured on the shoulders to the hospital and to provide first-aid.

This is as it should be. The work done does not make us proud of all selfless workers but work needs to be increased; people in different areas have to be reached; new problems have to be studied in depth and the workers given fresh and further orientation and their training and role strengthened. This apart, Red Cross a world wide movement has a bigger responsibility of not only organising the services but also to spread the message of brotherhood and of selfless service of helping

and healing based on its principles of humanity, impartiality, mutuality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

Not only the work that has begun will continue but I am confident it also will expand faster to make life more comfortable and meaningful for the thousands of people who still have to find their way to the main stream.

My best wishes to you all for the New Year. May the coming year bring greater opportunities for all.

## Safety-Health-Environment

I AM VERY happy to be with you this morning. I am also glad that a large number of national and international delegates and experts have gathered here to deliberate on the important topics of Safety, Health and Environment. These areas have assumed such a great significance that periodic discussions and exchange of views and information are necessary. I am happy that the National Safety Council is playing a useful role in this direction. Two years back I had the pleasure of inaugurating an International Symposium on similar topics organised by the Council in this very hall.

Providing employment, removing poverty and raising the standards of living of the ever growing population are continuing challenges for the developing countries. All resources are required to be harnessed to meet these challenges. Industrialisation and scientific and technological advancements have a key role to play in bringing about a transformation in the economic development and prosperity of these nations. However, it must be ensured that the various hazards arising out of these activities are effectively controlled to minimise the human suffering.

Constitution lays down in its Directive Principles that safe and humane conditions of work must be provided for our industrial workers and calls upon the State and every citizen to protect and improve the environment.

To carry out the will of the Constitution, the State has enacted various laws for the safety, health and welfare of workers in different sectors and for the protection of environment. From time to time these legislations are updated and made more stringent. I am glad that a comprehensive Environment (Protection) Act has recently been brought on the statute book, and a bill has been introduced in the Parliament to bring extensive amendments to the Factories Act. There are a number of sectors which are still to be covered by safety and health statutes. Our goal should be to cover these sectors also. In

this regard, priority should be given to those sectors which are more hazardous.

The legislation can provide only the basic and minimum requirements and a great deal more has to be done. The responsibility for safety and health should be shared by the Management supplementing the efforts of the government. The total cooperation between the management and the workers and the involvement of trade unions is very essential. In industry, importance must be given to 'man' and not to 'machine' alone.

There has been a tremendous growth in the chemical industry all over the world and this growth is expected to continue. Many of the chemical plants handle and store large quantities of highly toxic and hazardous substances. The disasters and other major incidents which have taken place in the recent past in different parts of the world in this industry have shown that they pose a great danger not only to the employees within the plant but also to the community at large and the environment as a whole. The developing countries must ensure that full safety knowhow and the safeguards and devices as adopted in the principal country are also incorporated and installed as an integral part of the production process.

It is of utmost importance that the society should also be fully prepared to deal with any mishap if it occurs. The managements of hazardous plants and local authorities should jointly prepare effective emergency plans and adequately inform the emergency services, employees and local population regarding the steps to be taken in different types of emergencies.

Transportation of hazardous materials by road and rail has also assumed great importance. In a vast and developing country like ours, these substances are transported over long distances, even to the remotest places, where no medical or other emergency facilities are available. Thus the population in the villages and other remote areas, which was so far considered safe, has also become vulnerable. In the event of a mishap therefore, the people involved, being not aware of the hazards, are subjected to greater risks.

There is a need to evolve national codes for safe transportation of these substances by road or rail. We should also establish a network of emergency action centres throughout the country. Similar steps will, no doubt, be necessary in most of the developing countries. I am glad that this subject is being deliberated upon during the Congress.

We should also not ignore the fact that a major mishap in a

chemical factory may have its adverse impact on the environment of a number of neighbouring countries. The recent accidents involving the chemical plants in some of the West European countries, which resulted in the spillage of large quantities of deadly chemicals into the fabled waters of the river Rhine, exemplify this aspect. International cooperation and sharing of information are absolutely essential to tackle this type of emergency. This is also one of the important lessons that we can learn from the Chernobyl disaster.

The generation of nuclear power has been known to possess high potential for causing health damage. Safeguards have therefore been built-in at the various stages of production by different countries to minimise the chance of a mishap.

Still the mankind has seen some disasters in this field also. They have heightened the fear and created a feeling of insecurity among the general public. However, each disaster has led to a thorough review of the safety and emergency measures with a view to carry out improvements. A similar review has been carried out by most of the countries in the wake of Chernobyl also. I am glad that the review carried out by the technical and scientific experts in India has assured us that the safety measures taken are adequate.

While planning for environmental protection, we have to consider the measures to be taken to control industrial pollution, as well as to see that our natural resources are preserved. Ecologists have rightly drawn our attention to the consequences of the massive deforestation taking place in our country. I am glad that the Government has taken up the programme of tree plantation and conservation seriously. To encourage wider participation, it is also giving recognition to the work of voluntary organisations working in this field.

The pollution of our water resources, with domestic and industrial wastes, is another area of great concern. I hope that we will be able to carry out clean up programmes for our river systems and exercise control over the discharge of pollutants into them.

Accidental injuries are not confined to the workplace, but also take a heavy human toll on our roads and in our homes. I am informed that the rate of road accidents in India is one of the highest in the world. Further, the emissions from vehicles are a major source of air pollution, especially in big cities. With increased prosperity in our homes, the dangers have also risen. With implementation of our programme of rural electrification and the use of cooking gas in increasing number of houses, the dangers of electric shock and fire

have also increased. I am glad that the Congress will deliberate on these two priority areas also.

In conclusion it may be said that the problems of Safety, Health and Environment are so wide ranging that they cannot be tackled through legislation alone. The people at large have to be involved, so that it really becomes a national commitment. To achieve such involvement, voluntary agencies have a great role to play. They should educate, inform and take other measures to promote awareness and work towards developing a self regulating system. I am glad that the National Safety Council has been playing an exemplary role in this regard most effectively.

I now have great pleasure in inaugurating this Congress and wish it's deliberations all success.

## Health-Care Services

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here and to inaugurate the International Seminar on Unani Medicine.

I always feel happy whenever I am in the company of intellectuals, the distinguished Hakims and health scientists for though you represent different disciplines and specialities you are concerned with the common issue of the well-being of mankind. I feel heartened to know that delegates have come from different corners of the world to participate in this seminar which is of special significance not merely because it is the first being hosted by India but because it will examine the role of a time-tested, medical system i.e. Unani Medicine in health promotion. I extend a very warm welcome to you all and wish for your successful deliberations.

Today the health situation in the world is far from satisfactory. The impression that the people in the developed nations are healthier than those in the developing 'Third World' does not appear to be realistic. If we go by lower death rates, and higher life-expectancies as the yardsticks of health then certainly developed world enjoys a better state of health. But if cancer, heart diseases, strokes, depression and other psychological disorders are taken into consideration then the developing countries would come out better in any comparison. An objective analysis of the situation shows that whereas over-medicalization of life has played havoc with the well-being of man in the over-industrialised societies, the dominance causes of ill-health in the poor and developing countries are starvation, malnutrition and lack of sanitation and essential health care services. Therefore our conception of health would have to change. Health, it should be categorically understood, is not merely getting rid of disease and virus, but a state of vitality borne out of physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual welfare.

No system of medicine can be considered as inferior and every system has its own greatness and merits. Any system could be adopted



depending upon its usefulness and for its remedial action. Unani Tibb, Ayurveda and some other traditional systems of medicine, take a holistic view of man in relation to his environment. According to their philosophy "human organism is a multi-dimensional being possessing body, mind and spirit, all inextricably connected, each part affecting the whole and the whole being greater than the sum of the parts." These systems offer time-tested remedies and methods not only in fighting disease but in promotion of positive health. Since the medicines used in these systems are of natural origin, mostly herbal—they are almost free of any harmful side-effects. This makes a strong point in favour of rediscovering the treasures of knowledge embedded in these systems and making their optimal utilization in health care.

We in India have a long and cherished history of various traditional systems of medicine. Ayurveda is an ancient science with an almost unbroken tradition of safety and efficacy. Our heritage in this field is amply enriched further with Unani and Siddha systems. Yoga and other allied systems provide an excellent basis of preventive health care. The excellence and uniqueness of all these systems is that they do not look at health as being merely an absence of disease, but in positive terms of balance and harmony of body, mind and soul.

We have a large number of practitioners of these systems dispersed all over the country including far-flung and remote areas. Their closeness to the community and acceptability by the people make them ideal material for being utilised for providing health coverage to the teeming millions of the country. This vast reservoir of our health manpower available in areas where their presence is crucially required has not been adequately harnessed for national needs.

The Unani system of medicine has deep and strong roots in our civilization. The Unani Medicine as is practised in Indian sub-continent is the result of a fine process of synthesis and evolution. At present the system is, although, practised in many countries, it is India where it is preserved in a well-developed form. The Indian contribution to preserve and develop Unani Medicine is immense. Out of many renowned Indian Hakims I would like to mention the name of Hakim Ajmal Khan who was responsible for initiating scientific research in this system and established the famous Ayurvedic and Unani Tibbi College in Delhi. Ajmal Khan, though himself a Unani Hakim was for equal and independent development of Ayurveda. Besides the A & U Tibbi College, the Hindustani Dawakhana was also set up by him for the manufacture of medicines used in both Unani

and Ayurvedic systems of medicine. Let me remind the present generation his words which he spelled out some six decades ago and which are still relevant. I quote "we have entered this field to make our medical arts complete and developed. We not only aim at establishing ourselves completely on our ancestor's correct and disciplined way, but also drawing benefit of the advancements made in medical science the world over. We deem it unfortunate for every science that its doors are shut, and the light of scientific researches is not allowed to enter." It is in this perspective that I would like to urge the proponents of Unani Medicine to develop their system according to its basic philosophy but at the same time drawing fullest advantage from modern scientific achievements. This approach would not only help make this age-old system more beneficial to the mankind but also more acceptable to the scientific community.

I have learnt that the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine, under whose aegis this seminar has been organised, has made much headway in its various research schemes and come out with successful treatments of some common diseases. I congratulate them and give my best wishes for a speedy progress in their ventures. I hope that this seminar will go a long way in widening their vision and giving meaningful directions to their pursuit.

I wish you all success in your deliberations. I have great pleasure in inaugurating this seminar.

## Serve Humanity

**T**HE AIM OF the Rotary Movement in the world is to serve humanity. It is a worldwide movement, which has thrown up a large number of Philanthropists in many parts of the globe.

This movement encourages people to enhance their capabilities in their vocations to give their best to the society.

I have been watching with keenness the activities of Rotary Clubs in various parts of our country and have been full of appreciation for the spirit with which they work.

Ever since the creation of the world, men and women have been impelled by the spirit of service to and sympathy for others. The greatmen of all countries, saints, seers and religious teachers have been imparting the teachings of service to the needy, the poor, the oppressed and the deserving.

The concept of service reigns in the realm of spiritualism, but unfortunately this is not practised by all. We ought to follow the teachings of those greatmen of the world, who have always advocated service to the suffering. If all of us imbibe the spirit of philanthropy, humility and sympathy for others, it would help bridge the gaps and create fraternal feelings.

There are large disparities in our economic resources. These relate both to individuals and also to various nations. Some individuals have wealth much in excess of their legitimate needs and there are others who are wallowing in utter poverty. This lack of equilibrium must be corrected. There are millions of people in our country living below poverty line. There are others like scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, who have been suffering a great deal from discrimination at the hands of others. In our country untouchability has been banished legally, but it has not been eradicated from the minds of the people. Crores of our countrymen do not get proper nutrition, adequate clothes, proper health facilities—not even enough hygienic facilities. We should take steps to raise the standards of living of these people, before they become impatient.

Similarly some countries of the world are excessively opulent, whereas others are poor and have to look up to the wealthy nations and the international monetary bodies for help. The trade and fiscal policies of developed countries are such as to put a great deal of burden on the developing and poor countries. The debts taken by the developing nations have put them in a very tight position, as they have to pay high rates of interest and have also to service the debts. The wealthy nations should take a liberal view and refrain from exercising indirect or direct economic pressure on the poor countries, because by economic burden the developing countries cannot exercise their real sovereignty.

I am glad the Rotary Club of Calcutta has organised the Month of World Understanding. Rotary Clubs and other such organisations can do a great deal in fostering the feelings of brotherhood and also understanding among nations.

## Welfare of Masses

IT IS A pleasure for me to inaugurate the Shriyans Prasad Jain Medical Auditorium, which is a valuable addition to the Bombay Hospital.

This Hospital with its medical research centre is a prominent institution in the country. I am glad to know that it is very well equipped and some outstanding physicians and surgeons are working in it. It is encouraging that our country is keeping pace with the highly developed nations in improving medical facilities and acquiring the highest skills in treating some of the most complicated diseases afflicting the man today. With the modernisation of our society and industrial development, some complex diseases have cropped up totally unknown before. This requires continuous research into the causes of such diseases and their treatment. If we have to save our people from unnecessary suffering, we must pay more attention to preventive measures, though the cure is also very important in case of incidence of exotic diseases.

Ours is a socialistic and democratic state and we have pledged to take welfare measures for our masses. But it is unfortunate that due to several factors including the limited resources, galloping population, gigantic problems like illiteracy and lack of basic amenities in our villages, it has not been possible so far to create health facilities for all our teeming millions.

Lack of safe drinking water, prevalence of pollution, ignorance and poverty are the main causes for poor health in our country. Mal-nutrition takes a heavy toll of children and women, especially in the poverty stricken rural areas.

The Central Government and the State Governments are making earnest efforts to implement programmes to alleviate poverty, provide employment and facilities in every walk of life including health facilities. The most important remedy would be to educate the masses in health promotion. Proper guidance about balanced diet and the

properties of vegetables, fruits, cereals and other local produce would be very helpful. Habit of personal environmental hygiene should be inculcated in children.

I am glad to know that the Bombay Hospital does not cater to the needs only of patients in Bombay, but from all parts of the country. I am told that patients from the countries of West Asia and Africa also benefit from the facilities available here. It is encouraging that instead of going abroad for treatment, patients visit this Hospital and other modern hospitals in our country for treatment. I have been told that about one and a half year back an institute of Medical Sciences was set up at this Hospital, which has been recognised by the National Board of Examination, Ministry of Health, Government of India and University of Bombay. It is good to know that well known experts from abroad come and teach at this Institute.

I would suggest that this Hospital should encourage students from rural areas to study Medicine and provide them scholarships with generosity. Generally students from urban areas studying medicine come from well to do families, but it is very difficult for students in rural areas to be able to acquire specialised knowledge. A liberal scheme to encourage them to acquire higher qualifications would provide a little more balance to education and progress in our country. While undertaking research, special attention should be paid to the use of local herbs, plants and other commodities. Some of the drugs imported from abroad are very costly and beyond the reach of our poor masses. If medical experts and researchers can make use of local herbs etc., it would be of help to our people.

I appreciate the efforts of the noted industrialist, Shri S.P. Jain, who apart from being one of the top businessmen, is also a social worker and a philanthropist. His love for humanity and dedication to the cause of social service speak of his human qualities. He has been carrying on the torch of philanthropy emblazoned by the late Shri Rameshwardas Birla. I wish Shri Jain good health and continued service to the nation.

With these words, I happily inaugurate the Medical Auditorium of this Hospital and wish you all success in your mission.

## Child Development Services

I AM GLAD to be able to associate myself with the National Awards for Child Welfare. I have to associate myself with quite a few ceremonies. But this gives me a sense of fulfilment as this presentation of National Awards are for Child Welfare.

The Government are presently laying the greatest emphasis on human resource development. The basis of human resource development is the development of the child. Here the role of the mother is irreplaceable, the role of the family crucial. However, since our country has such a large population below the poverty line and since the literacy level in the country is still so poor, the State cannot leave the bringing up of and care for the children entirely in the hands of the family. For the disadvantaged children, the State has to intervene massively and effectively. And the State intervention has to be properly concerted with the community and individual efforts.

The country's National Policy for Children speaks of such state intervention. To quote from the National policy for Children adopted by the Nation in 1974: "it shall be the policy of the State to provide adequate services to children, both before and after birth and through the period of growth, to ensure their full physical, mental and social development. The State shall progressively increase the scope of such services so that, within a reasonable time, all children in the country enjoy optimum conditions for their balanced growth."

I am glad that the State intervention, in the manner spoken of in the National Policy for Children, has already begun in a telling manner. The Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS) is a very large State intervention to secure the well-being and development of the country's disadvantaged children. I am told that almost a crore of our children and nursing/expectant mothers are presently covered by the programme. Community cooperation is the cornerstone of this programme. The basic village level worker in this programme belonging to the village itself and rendering services on a small honorarium symbolizes community cooperation in this programme.

We need many more of such ICDS projects to secure, in very near future, a total coverage of all the disadvantaged children in the country under this scheme. We also need to further broad-base the services under this scheme to secure the proper well-being and development of our children.

The National Awards for Child Welfare are a State endeavour to encourage the voluntary bodies to work in the field of child welfare. The National Policy for Children recognizes the fact that the State endeavours have to coalesce with the voluntary efforts to achieve the multiplier effects of the several programmes for the well-being and development of the children. I again quote from the National Policy for Children: "India has a tradition of voluntary action. It shall be the endeavour of the State to encourage and strengthen voluntary action so that State and voluntary efforts complement each other. The resources of voluntary organisations, trusts, charities and religious and other endowments would have to be tapped to the extent possible for promoting and developing child welfare programmes."

In our successive endeavours to care for the disadvantaged children, we have only achieved a very partial success to tap community resources. Religious organisations, trusts and others in the country represent as yet a largely untapped resource of considerable dimension that could be tapped and used to mount developmental programmes for our own children who would otherwise remain uncared for.

As Awardees of the National Awards for Child Welfare—you represent the cream of the voluntary organisations working in the country for its disadvantaged children. The excellence of your efforts have earned you and your institute the State recognition in the form of the National Award for Child Welfare. I congratulate you on the excellence of your programme efforts. I have no doubt you will be striving to perfect your efforts and achieve greater results for your efforts to reach many more of our children and more effectively.

More than that, you may perform an excellent service for the cause of advocacy for our children. I have no doubt that you are already doing this. However, I urge you to do more so that we soon achieve national efforts on a national scale to work for the well-being and development of our children.

Your efforts in this regard may take many forms. One form that I am able to envisage is to spread the message to all corners of the country that the disadvantaged children of the country need to be cared for so that this responsibility has to be shared by all in the



country. We see in this country now a paradox of many childless families craving for a child while many orphaned or destitute children who could do with adoptive parents, remain parentless and uncared for. Let the voluntary organisations who are represented here and those who are not, take a pledge that the care of the disadvantaged children will be a joint national endeavour of the families, communities and the State.

I find no better way to conclude than to quote from a poet who sang:

*"Between the dark and the day light,  
when the night is beginning to lower,  
There comes a pause in the day's occupation,  
That is known as the children's hour"*

The children's desperate hour is now and here and it brooks no delay. This is the time to help better their lives. And by doing so, we will only better our own lives—both individually and collectively.

## Ideals and Values

IT IS A matter of pleasure that the Foundation for Amity and National Solidarity have organised this function, which is aimed at creating awareness in society about the need for friendship, unity and solidarity in the country. It was on the 2nd June, last year that this Foundation had arranged a function at this very location and we had talked about strengthening the secular foundations of our country and discouraging separatist and divisive forces.

Our country has a long history and it has been known for its religious tolerance and communion of ideas, views and philosophies. It has been a cradle of many languages, faiths and creeds and has been a veritable ocean in which myriads of streams and rivers have mingled. People of diverse origins and races came here and brought with them their peculiar customs, ways of life and cultures. Many of them had to leave, but they left behind some elements of their cultures, which became an indistinguishable part of the Indian culture, as these were absorbed in our ethos. The British stayed in our country for quite long and it is only forty years back that we could get rid of their yoke after a long and arduous struggle. Our struggle for freedom was led by men of vision and catholicity of views, inspired by the sense of patriotism, nationalism and humanism. The tallest among these national leaders was Mahatma Gandhi who showed the way of non-violence and love, preached amity and forgiveness even for our subjugators. His philosophy was that of true religion, the religion of humanity. He had to sacrifice his life at the alter of human love, communal harmony and justice.

It was believed that people would forget discord and hatred after healing of the wounds of partition and a new beginning would be made, but that was not to be. Even after forty years of Independence, there are occasional disturbances. It is difficult to pinpoint any particular reason for this blood-letting. Whether it is a legacy of the old 'Divide and Rule' policy of our foreign rulers, which is still

haunting the minds of our people, or is inspired by forces inimical to our peaceful survival and progress. It may be due to new economic and social tensions. It may be due to an amalgam of many factors. But in ultimate analysis these factors cause great harm to our national development in economic, social and political fields.

Independence is a great boon, as we are masters of our own national destiny. But ironically, some steps taken for the betterment of the country have proved counter-productive. It is good to serve a language but linguism is bad. It is good to serve the interests of various regions, but regionalism is not desirable. Though our country has all along been influenced by caste and religion, casteism and religious fanaticism have been doing us a great harm.

To a great extent our economy remained backward during the foreign rule. Many strides have been taken to upgrade our economy, strengthen our social fabric and to raise the standards of living of our people. Various programmes have been undertaken to uplift the people, especially the rural population and of course the poorest of the poor in urban areas from the quagmire of poverty, but the task is stupendous. Even now, after four decades of independence, about 25 crore people are still below the poverty line. Many crores have just risen above the margin. Vast resources, patience and perseverance are required to take them on the road to optimism. We are a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, but we have to traverse a long distance to give our country a real socialistic pattern. Economic disparities still prevail, which have to be narrowed down to the maximum extent possible. Though it seems a distant dream to establish a classless, casteless society, why should caste play such a formidable role in determining the social and economic status of any individual? Why should not everyone be treated alike? Though discrimination on the basis of caste has been eliminated and equality has been guaranteed under our Constitution, our minds have not been exorcised of this deep-rooted prejudice. If India has to develop into a forward-looking, progressive and enlightened nation, it will have to rid itself of the antiquated ideas of caste and communal prejudices. The disparities suffered by backward classes and tribes and other such groups will also have to be erased.

It is a matter of great anxiety and sorrow that Indians should be threatened in their own homes and villages by fellow Indians and their business should be disrupted. No one should feel insecure in his own abode or anywhere else in the country. Every Indian should have a

right to live and work in any part of the country without fear for his life, property and honour. For our national survival we have to ensure national integration. It is narrow-mindedness and shortsightedness of those, who for their temporary and parochial gains try to weaken the nation. No thinking person can ever harm the unity of the country. Only those who are motivated by narrow interests try to tarnish the basic values and ideals of the nation and to blur its image. For centuries, India has stood for certain values and ideals. A great responsibility devolves on the present generation to uphold these values. There is no scope for any complacency. Such tasks cannot be accomplished by the Government alone, though the government owes a major responsibility. To fight against injustice, inequality and discrimination and to combat the sources of disunity and disruption, every social and cultural organisation must join hands with one another and to check the tendencies leading to separatism and fragmentation. In this great struggle, students, teachers, intellectuals, the press and other mass-media have to play a great part. It is the duty of authors, artists and the elite to strengthen the fabric of nationalism. Throughout the ages India's greatness had been recognised for its tolerance and respect for other faiths. In olden times, India was known for its ruling dynasties, now it is known for its modern phase of democracy and progress, its penchant for human equality and struggle against imperialism, exploitation and racial discrimination. To enable ourselves to champion the cause of the deprived and the downtrodden in the world, we must first devote our attention to ensure equal opportunities for all our people within the country. We have two most essential tasks before us viz. to press forward with our family planning programme, because if we cannot stem the galloping rise in population, our efforts at progress will be minimised. We have also to accelerate our endeavours to expand employment opportunities, as the rising tide of unemployment, especially among the educated youth, will prove disastrous. We have also to address ourselves to a balanced growth in all parts of our country, for which huge resources are required. But we have no reason for disappointment or despair. If we all pledge to work hard through cooperative and shared efforts, we can overcome any obstacle.

What constitutes a nation? According to our late President, Dr. Radhakrishnan, "It is not a juxtaposition of individuals. It is a society based on a communion of minds, a union of hearts. The great everlasting things that matter for a nation, love and sacrifice, have

come down to us for over forty centuries. As long as we carry in our hearts the image of these great peaks whose foundations are not shaken, though the earth may rock and sway, our future is safe." We have to look ahead and not backward. We have to attain greater heights instead of marching towards the lower depths of disdain, discord or disharmony. We have to work for a brighter future, which can best be achieved by eradicating illiteracy and spreading education among the vast millions of our people. It is incredible though true that over sixty per cent of our people are still illiterate.

Our Constitution has bestowed upon us the generous gift of Democracy. We have to work according to the dictates of the democratic ideals with a sense of fairness and tolerance. The philosophy of checks and balances provided in the Constitution must be worked out with sincerity and solicitude. The country can progress if everyone discharges his role faithfully and earnestly.

I appreciate the initiative of organisations like the Foundation for Amity and National Solidarity to create awareness among the people for unity and cohesion and to orient their minds to fraternal love and nationalistic outlook. We are passing through a critical juncture in our history. It is necessary for all of us to make united efforts to achieve our goals. I wish the Foundation great success in its efforts to serve the cause of national unity.

# Education

## Shaping Modern Education

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here and to participate in the 125th Anniversary Celebrations of this premier educational institution of the country. The development of modern education in India owes a great deal to the Christian missionaries. The laying of the foundation of the modern education system was one of the signal contributions resulting from our contact with Europe. Although economic exploitation was the primary objective behind the maritime exploration of that time, there were among them people who were inspired by a spirit of service, and who believe in the brotherhood of all communities. St. Francis Xavier who was one of the founders of the Society of Jesus was one among them. They were keenly interested in establishing closer links based on mutual respect between Christianity and the great religious traditions of India. It was their unremitting effort that led to the establishment of a chain of St. Xavier's and Loyol Schools and Colleges throughout India. These institutions have made a powerful impact on our education and culture.

The 'oldest educational institutions established by the Jesuits in West Bengal is the St. Xavier's School and College. From a very modest beginning, the St. Xavier's School and College has grown into a major educational centre which today, I am told, has over 5,300 students and about 190 teachers. In its long history, the St. Xavier's College has turned out a large number of eminent men who have shaped and developed the destiny of India. To mention a few examples, Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore and Acharya Jagdish Chandra Bose were students here. Both of them achieved universal acclaim for their great contributions to the nation's educational and cultural life. St. Xavier's can justly boast that it was instrumental in shaping and developing such greatmen.

The purpose of education is the development of the total personality of the students. Education should help every individual to realise his full potential and develop in him the faculties of critical

analysis and understanding. Education should also endow each individual with a deep sense of humanism, of reason, and of tolerance, it is in these tasks that the role of teachers is crucial.

In our tradition, a teacher was never one who was lecturing down to his students. Our concept of a teacher is that of the *Guru*, the friend, philosopher and guide. It is time that we pondered whether we can ever recapture the spirit of our *Gurus* in our educational endeavours. Can we try to transform the process of education into an effort in which teaching and learning are equally important? If teaching is merely handing down notes for students to memorise and reproduce, there can be little of learning in the process. If teachers, on the other hand, help their students in their quest for knowledge, in stimulating enquiry, and in sharpening their intellect, education will acquire a new meaning and content.

I am glad that one of the major efforts of St. Xavier's College is the training of teachers. I am sure that with your great tradition, you are able to impart to the young teachers something of those qualities which made your teachers approachable, ready to advise and encourage with unselfish and unstinted generosity. It should be the endeavour of teachers to foster among their students a universal outlook that transcends all barriers of religion, culture, language, and so on. If the students coming out of our institutions are able to live in complete harmony, understanding and mutual respect, they will be able to develop in them a loyalty that cuts across all narrow affiliations of community, castes and group. The vision of education should go far beyond acquisition of knowledge. Education should indeed be a liberating influence, liberating the individual from all selfish concerns. When our inner spirit is liberated from narrow selfish concerns, we become more free, mature and capable of greater service in any responsibility that we are called upon to perform.

Although we have since our national independence built a modern base of education, and one of the largest educational systems in the world, we have still a long way to go in ensuring all our people the minimum education that they need. We are striving to achieve the goal of universalisation of elementary education. Poverty and ignorance are the two major issues that we have to relentlessly fight against. As long as large sections of our people remain poor and ignorant, our goal of ensuring social justice and equality of opportunity to all our citizens will remain an idle dream.



If we have to wage a determined war against poverty and ignorance, those of us who have had the benefit of education have to assume a far greater responsibility in sharing the benefits with our unprivileged brethren. And there is no instrument more powerful than the educational system which can effectively meet this challenge. It is in shaping and developing an educational system endowed with these qualities that the St. Xavier's institutions have made the most significant contribution. Those of you who are associated with this institution can justifiably feel proud of these achievements.

On this occasion of the 125th Anniversary of this great institution, I offer my warm greetings and good wishes to the teachers, the students and all others who are associated with this institution.

I have great pleasure in inaugurating this function.

## From Darkness to Light

I FEEL HAPPY to be here today and to associate myself with the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the St. Thomas Inter College. The college deserves to be congratulated for its services to the cause of education over the past fifty years. Your college is named after Saint Thomas, one of the twelve disciples of Lord Jesus Christ, with the great motto, "from darkness to light". From humble beginning in 1934, St. Thomas college has now grown into a full-fledged educational institution. The great *Upanishadic* prayer says, "*Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya*"—lead me from darkness to light. This great prayer is well reflected in your motto and I feel heartened to note that students from your college are serving the country in various fields as administrators, scientists, technologists, doctors, entrepreneurs and as social workers. The primary aim of education is to prepare the pupils to face life on their own, endowed with character and wisdom. It is meant to prepare them as responsible citizens which in turn depends upon all round development of the individual based on eternal values like tolerance, justice, truth and compassion. Civil and moral education occupy as much importance as other aspects of knowledge in the over-all development.

Our society, lying stagnant for a long period in history under colonial rule, has begun to move forward. Science, democracy, secularism and socialism are working together to reshape the society in a fundamental way. The necessity and demand of the times is to understand and assimilate those forces so as to enable our country to emerge with a new strength, a new character and a new destiny for itself. Looked at from this stand-point, it occurs to me that there is a great need to reorient the philosophy of our educational system by blending the eternal values with the new forces that are moving the country forward. This is a great responsibility on all of us especially the teachers who mould the students of today as worthy citizens of tomorrow.

Education is very dear to me and I am one with those who consider that education is not so much for employment as for enlightenment. By enlightenment I mean, the individual should feel part and parcel of the society, an integral part of the whole. This kind of enlightenment and realisation should come to individual through the educational system.

In India, the christian missionaries have rendered signal services to the spread of education and to inculcate the spirit of service and love. I have had many occasions to visit schools and colleges run by christian missionaries in different parts of our vast country. I feel impressed with the quality of education imparted to children in their institutions.

I would like to reiterate that the quality of education throughout the country should be improved with the universal ideal of oneness of humanity.

I thank the authorities for inviting me here today I wish you all good luck and fulfilment in life.

## Heritage And Ideal's

I AM INDEED very happy to be with you. Last year I had the opportunity of inaugurating the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of the University. On that occasion many distinguished persons of our country were honoured by this University as a token of its recognition of their work. The University of Delhi is one of the few educational institutions of higher learning and research, which command an enviable position in the academic circle both in India and outside. It is gratifying for me to express my sense of appreciation for Professor Gurbaksh Singh, who has led this University creditably for the last five years.

The Faculty of Management Studies, I am told, enjoys a unique position in the field of management education and training. It is a pioneering management institution and has carved a strong niche for itself in the world of business, government and industry. Needless to say that this was backed by dedication of the people, their continued hardwork, determination and a clear vision. I understand that the Faculty maintains closer contacts with the Government and business and a number of corporations have come forward to collaborate in its efforts. What can be a better example of two-way relationship between business world and the academic community than the setting up of Shanti Prasad Jain Advanced Management Research Centre with a liberal initial grant of Rs. 50 lakhs by the Times of India Group of Companies.

I am sure that the Shanti Prasad Jain Advanced Management Research Centre will go a long way in fulfilling the desire to have a full-fledged management education system in the country. There has been a phenomenal growth in the number of management institutes and universities, both in public and in private sectors. However, I still feel that a lot needs to be done to promote management research and its application in various sectors of the economy, so as to improve our competitive performance in many spheres of economy and

particularly in the international market. In this context, I would like to mention about the urgency to improve the performance of many public sector undertakings and government departments. The need to take the benefits of technology, education and services to the rural areas, assumes greater significance in view of our increased emphasis on the eradication of poverty. I am happy to learn that the proposed centre, would be fully devoted to the advancement of management research in the country.

I am sure the research undertaken by the centre would go a long way in accomplishing our difficult task of improving productivity in various sectors of economy by suggesting a positive and imaginative approach rather than aping foreign models.

We have to synthesise our rich cultural heritage and ideals with the innovative ideas of the day from all parts of the world, in the *Rig Vedas* tradition, which said, "Let nobler thoughts come from all parts of the world".

It is heartening to note that the formality of laying the Foundation Stone of Shanti Prasad Jain Advanced Management Research Centre has not stood in its way of commencement of its research programme and activities. I am told, that the Institute has already published a number of valuable documents and some of its publications are available today.

Ladies & Gentlemen! my best wishes would always be with all of you and I believe that your dedication and commitment in developing this Centre would go a long way in our ultimate mission of nation building.

I thank the Vice-Chancellor, Sardar Gurbaksh Singh for inviting me here today.

# Sports for National Integration

**I** AM DELIGHTED to be here with you this morning in connection with the inauguration ceremony of the South Centre Complex of Asia's premier sports institute, the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports. I am particularly happy that my distinguished predecessor Shri Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, had laid the foundation stone of this complex about three and half years back and I am now called upon to inaugurate it.

The Society for the National Institute of Physical Education and Sports, of which Shri Vidyacharan Shukla is the Chairman, deserves full appreciation for putting up the beautiful complex at a cost of about rupees three crores. The Government of Karnataka and the University of Bangalore also deserve congratulations on the completion of this project as without their liberal approach in allotment of land and other facilities, the task could not have been so well accomplished. The Architects and the Engineers of the Central Public Works Department have also done a very good job. The complex has now all the basic facilities including several play-fields and play-grounds, covered halls, hostels, class-rooms and staff quarters etc. All this will, no doubt add to further efficiency and it should effectively meet the needs of the Southern States.

I have been observing with keen interest the growth of the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports since its inception at Patiala in the year 1961. The Institute has produced so far about 7,000 professionally competent coaches and about 9000 Sports Instructors, besides preparing hundreds of National teams for international competitions.

It is very heartening that the International Olympic Committee and the International Amateur Athletic Federation have taken a decision recently to put up their permanent Centre for Asia at the NIS, Patiala, to produce coaches in Track and Field events for the Asian Region as a whole. This is a great tribute not only to the NIS but also to India

itself. The Institute has thus won wide acclaim both nationally and internationally and we can be well proud of its achievements.

There is lot of talent in the field of games and sports in the Southern Region of our country. I am sure that with the opening of this sophisticated and modern sports complex at Bangalore a new era will begin in the history of sports in this part of the country and soon we shall have a crop of outstanding sportsmen and sportswomen from Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and other areas falling in this region who could successfully follow the footsteps of Amrithraj brothers, Ramanathan Krishnan, Prakash Padukone, Azharuddin, T.C. Yohannan, P.T. Usha, Valsamma and others.

I am very happy that the NIS is planning to embark upon a big programme of development during the Seventh Five Year Plan period. The proposed opening of sports hostels attached to the Regional Coaching Centres, branches of the NIS in the Western and Central Regions, opening of the High Altitude Training Centre at Shimla, a Winter Sports Centre at Manali, a Yachting Centre at Bombay, and a Rowing Centre at Jaipur are most welcome. I am also told that the Institute is well set to open shortly its centre at Imphal to meet the urgent needs of the North-East Region. I congratulate the Institute on all these activities.

Although games and sports have been a part of Indian tradition and we had stalwarts like Arjuna, yet the modern games are not developed to the extent that our large population and its potential talent in this field deserve. Presumably that has been so because in the past, scientific support to our sports-persons was missing and not much attention was being given to our university and school students. With the establishment of a strong Faculty of Sports Sciences at the NIS and launching of a chain of field stations in selected universities it should be possible to overcome this deficiency. With the Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi keeping the Sports portfolio with himself assisted by a young Minister of State, Shri R.K. Jaichandra Singh, I see a bright future for games and sports in India.

Playing the game is undoubtedly more important than winning medals but it is also important that when we take part in international contests, we are well prepared to do so. I am sure that in the Tenth Asian Games which are going to be held in Seoul next year, India will not only repeat the performance in the IX Asian Games but rather would make all efforts to improve the medal tally.

Popularisation of sports and games in Rural and Tribal areas must receive high priority. Local Bodies and Town Planning Organisations should also give due attention to the needs of play-fields and playgrounds. I feel confident, both these aspects will be better looked after in the coming years. Here the main responsibility lies on the State Government and voluntary organisations.

Sports can play a big role in strengthening bonds of unity and integration. Steps should, therefore, be taken to formulate schemes to ensure the best manner in which national integration could be achieved through sports. Only a month back there was a National Junior Handball Championship at Ludhiana in Punjab. There were as many as 18 boys and 13 girls teams from all over the country which participated in it. In the boys section the Championship was won by Punjab with J & K as runner up. In the girls section the Championship was won by Manipur and Andhra Pradesh was runner up. There cannot be a better example of national integration than this. All the participants as well as the sports loving people of Ludhiana enjoyed the well contested matches for six days.

The physical fitness is most essential for achieving success in the field of games and sports. I am glad that under the leadership of Shri Vidyacharan Shukla strenuous physical fitness tests are being applied at home to find out the physical fitness of players before their participation in international events. I would like a large number of gymnasia to be constructed all over the country to provide means for improving fitness of our people around the year. The *Vyayamshalas* which were our ancient heritage are becoming extinct day-by-day and we must replace them by modern and well equipped gymnasia.

I understand the NIS will be celebrating its Silver Jubilee next year. I have great pleasure in wishing this great Institute all the best in years to come.

Last but not the least I must give salute to the great hero of Modern Indian History, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, after whom the Institute is named. May the shining example of Netaji's life and struggle inspire the youth of our country to strive for excellence in the sphere of sports. Before I conclude, I would like to thank the Chairman of NIS Shri V.C. Shukla for inviting me here.



## Light of Life

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be amidst you all today and to inaugurate the commemorative Seminar-cum-Workshop on the occasion of completion of 150 years of the Calcutta Medical College. This Medical College has established a long record of service to society. This college has produced eminent men in the field of medical science as well as in public life, amongst whom I cannot but recall the illustrious name of Dr. B.C. Roy, the first Chief Minister of West Bengal in Free India. It has been a pioneer in the field of medical education in our country. The city of Calcutta, its institutions and leaders made immense contribution to India's renaissance, to the freedom movement and to the economic development over the last more than a hundred and fifty years. West Bengal in general and Calcutta in particular have played a pioneering role. This is the place from where Swami Vivekananda carried the message of service to all parts of the country and four corners of the world. This is a fitting occasion for us to remember all those great nationalists, freedom fighters and nation builders, and pay our homage to their hallowed memory.

India has made significant economic progress since independence, over the last three decades, and today India is in the forefront of developing countries in the world. A massive infrastructure has been developed which will allow for an uninterrupted growth of our economy in future. A unique feature of this achievement is that all this has been achieved within the framework of democratic institutions and with the consent and participation of the people. Economic growth with social justice is the motive force of our developmental efforts. We are now endowed with necessary skills, technology and institutional framework to forge ahead towards the attainment of our goal of removing poverty, disease, hunger and ignorance. We have given top priority to the development of the human resources, as man is the centre of all growth process. Health occupies a prominent place in this order, as a healthy nation is a wealthy nation.

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Speech on inaugurating the Commemorative Seminar-cum-Workshop on completion of 150 years of the Calcutta Medical College, Calcutta, August 2, 1985

It cannot be denied that good food, housing and education will provide the necessary climate for good health. This is a longdrawn process which takes place along with improved standard of living resulting from economic development. However, a widespread knowledge of diseases, simple methods of preventing them along with easily available remedies, will go a long way in promoting health care.

India, as you are all aware, is committed to provide health for all by 2000 A.D. In accordance with this, the health policy has been redrawn and is in the process of implementation. There has been a remarkable growth in medical colleges, hospitals, specialist institutions over the past thirty years. However, what is more important than these health facilities, is the spread of knowledge about preventive methods. The old saying that "prevention is better than cure" is always valid. As I see it, this should be the foremost task of the medical profession as a whole.

There is no doubt that better buildings and equipments promote efficiency in hospitals. But instead of expanding buildings, stress should be laid on the treatment and after-care facilities of patients. Doctors should be appointed to educate the people about the common diseases of eye, nose, ear, etc. and also advice them how to prevent them. This knowledge should be made available to the common man so that diseases may not take epidemic form.

Time has come when the thirsty will not go to the water, but the water will go to the thirsty. Medicines should reach the patients. Patients should not be made to run after doctors, but doctors should run after the patients.

India lives in villages. Therefore, there should be mobile dispensaries to meet the needs of the villagers. These mobile dispensaries should be fully equipped with doctors, nurses, compounders and life saving medicines. They should go to each and every village and look after the patients there. Appropriate programmes should be formulated in this respect which should be publicised and distributed in the villages.

The ideal of service to the sick and needy should be the guiding spirit. One derives more pleasure in sharing with others whatever one possesses—be it wealth, knowledge or expertise. Service to the needy, to the weak, to the sick and to the poor is nothing less than worship of God. This is a social responsibility on the shoulders of the medical profession and I am confident that this spirit will inspire our young doctors and other medical and para medical personnel. This is the

essence of all faiths and creeds in the world. I do hope that our young men and women will take to this ideal and find their own fulfilment through rendering sincere and dedicated service to humanity.

Before concluding, I thank the authorities of the Calcutta Medical College for inviting me here today. I wish the College further and greater success in the years to come in the field of medical education and research.

## Culture and Tradition

**I** AM HAPPY to be here for the inauguration of the Institute of Sanskrit Studies and Research, which is being set up by the Asiatic Society. I recall having visited the Asiatic Society last year, when it was celebrating its bi-centenary, that was a year of rejuvenation for the Asiatic Society. I am glad that among the various projects taken up by the Society, in the wake of its reorganisation and rejuvenation in the bi-centenary year, the proposal for an Institute of Sanskrit Studies and Research is fructifying today.

One of the important events in the life of the Asiatic Society during its bi-centenary celebrations was the declaration by the Government of India that this was an institution of national importance. The Asiatic Society was founded in 1784, thanks to the efforts of the pioneering scholar and indologists Sir William Jones, with the objective of promoting studies and research concerning "Man and Nature". The scope of the Society was conceived in very broad terms and it served as a catalyst for promotion of studies in oriental arts, literature and sciences. Indeed, it has been said that the society has acted as the mother organisation which initiated and inspired most of the important and significant institutions and academies which have developed in our country in the fields of humanities, science, medicine and culture.

One of the important activities of the Asiatic Society naturally related to promotion of studies in Sanskrit and Sanskritic languages. Indeed the Society built up over the years a vast library of which more than 30,000 books in Sanskrit going back to ancient and medieval periods of our history formed a most valuable collection. The Society also devoted attention to other oriental languages and literature, such as Arabic and Persian. It is, therefore, quite in consonance with the tradition of the Asiatic Society that its present management has thought of instituting a centre for Sanskrit Studies and Research in

this great city of Calcutta, which has been in the vanguard of educational movement in our country over the last 200 years. Sanskrit has been the language in which most of the thinking of scholars, poets and scientists in ancient India has been expressed. This is one of the oldest languages in the world and philologists have expressed the view that several ancient languages like Sanskrit, Persian and Greek were inter-related and belonged to a common family. However, it is also a fact that Sanskrit remained by and large a language of the elite and did not become a language of the common people in India. It was the mother of most other Indian languages which have become the popular languages of the country. A study of the history and culture of Indian people is, however, not complete without a sound knowledge of Sanskrit. It is to be noted that Sanskrit is one of the 15 languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution.

I understand that the Institute of Sanskrit Studies and Research being set up by Asiatic Society is intended to be linked with the national project of the Rashtriya Sanskrit Sangathan for promoting advanced centres of Sanskrit learning in different parts of the country. In fact, I am told that a proposal for recognising this institute at Calcutta, as one of the affiliated institutes of the Rashtriya Sanskrit Sangathan, is under consideration of appropriate authorities.

I am happy to learn that many eminent Sanskrit Scholars have agreed to function as full-time or part-time Faculty Members of this Institute, and that there is a good response already from intending students for enrolment. This shows that there is a felt need for such an institute in this part of the country. I am confident that this will grow to be a centre for genuinely high standard of learning and research in Sanskrit and for dissemination of the best qualities of Indian culture and tradition.

I thank the Governor of West Bengal, who invited me to inaugurate this Institute, and wish the Institute success in the fulfilment of its objectives.

## Innovations and Progress

**T**O BE IN the beautiful city of Udaipur during any part of the year, especially on an occasion like this, makes me immensely happy. Rajasthan, with its heroic past, its rich cultural heritage and its striving for development and prosperity has all along inspired the people of India.

Underlying my happiness however is a sense of deep sorrow for the untimely death of Shrimati Indira Gandhi last year which caused the postponement of this exhibition. She took so much interest in this exhibition that her absence will no doubt be keenly felt, for years to come.

We are assembled here today on a significant occasion. This is the birth-anniversary week of late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The National Science Exhibition for Children is a fitting tribute to his memory. His love for children, his passion for science and its development in India have been unique. They would serve as beacon lights for all of us young and old alike.

Jawaharlal Nehru's passion for science and love for children was inherited by Shrimati Indira Gandhi. India made great progress in science and technology during the two decades of her stewardship. Fortunately for us the new leadership in the country also has immense faith in the modern science and technology for the progress of the country.

More than any of his contemporaries, Pandit Nehru realised that science had to play a vital role in our fight against ignorance, poverty and disease and in the building of a new vibrant India. Panditji said and I quote, "We have to find food, clothing, housing, education, health and so on, all the absolute necessities of life for the masses. So science must think in terms of the teeming millions that make up the population of our country. Science is a source of power which can be used for the welfare of all the inhabitants of this planet or it can destroy everything that humanity has built over thousands of years. In fact scientific knowledge, devoid of wisdom and sanity, proved

dangerous in the past and could prove disastrous in the future. Therefore, it is essential that scientific knowledge should be pursued and applied with the sole objective of bringing about the good of humanity."

Aware of the deeper aspects and meaning of science, Jawaharlalji said and I quote "I do not suppose humanity can live on Reactors alone. Certainly it cannot live on Elephanta alone ..... The great path of science is to be tempered by something and that something is spirituality, which gives us to some extent the right measures, the right perspective and right direction to look at ..."

The application of science was important to him but equally important was the growth of the 'scientific temper' as he often called it. Knowledge of science and scientific temper should liberate our minds from obscurantism, communalism, casteism, regionalism and all those forces that retard our progress and spiritual emancipation.

Science should make man more humane. Hence the need for the cultivation of science and a scientific temper so that young children of today can create a better world and a more prosperous India.

Science was once the private activity of an individual. But during the last 200 years it has transformed itself. It has become a matter of life and death for the millions. Therefore, the corporate activity of young scientists which science exhibitions promote throughout the country and which culminate in this national level exhibition, is of special significance. The ideas of a child—or a small group of children—get a concrete shape while they think about and work on their projects.

This was one reason that the National Science Exhibition for Children, which was first held in New Delhi in 1971 and subsequently held at Teen Murti House, New Delhi from 1972 to 1978 has now become a kind of nationwide movement. Science education is not confined to what is written. It goes much beyond textbooks. The experience of what happens within the classroom gets a fuller meaning through these exhibitions. These provide children with the opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding of scientific principles to solve real problems in everyday life. Children who work in "Science Clubs" and "Hobby Centres" gain through their activities a measure of self-confidence and a spirit of team work in creative endeavours. These are extremely important for the development of the individual because after all, human development is the ultimate aim of education.

Science exhibitions provide a rich experience to those children also who visit the exhibitions. These children see the working of models prepared by others and interact with their friends.

Besides children, adults, who have had little formal education, visit these exhibitions in thousands. They get a chance to acquaint themselves with the developments in science and technology. They also think how they can transform the life of the individual and the community. With utmost joy I have seen the young school-going scientists explaining models to elders. The science exhibition movement thus creates a general awareness among these people which is very important in a vast country like ours.

I understand that the guiding theme of this year's National Science Exhibition is "Indigenous Technology for Development". The choice of this theme is of great significance. It invites the participants to think and develop models and exhibits. They also develop innovations, equipment, process and practices, which are typically Indian. I expect, therefore, to see exhibits portraying indigenous developments in crop and seed technology, irrigation processes, animal husbandry, weaving, pottery, metal work and such other crafts.

Some of the Exhibits, I hope, would show or suggest innovations and developments which would increase the overall productivity of our country. Productivity implies the optimum utilization of our limited resources, avoiding their wastage in every possible way.

Development does not always connote progress. Many of the development activities are undertaken at the cost of irreparable damage to our environment. The scientists have the moral responsibility to guard against this danger. Our experience has already shown that it is science alone which can help us to make rapid progress while keeping under control factors that threaten the environment.

In addition, indigenous technologies for 'health for all' and the welfare of women, I am told, are areas which have attracted many a young child to work on.

I am particularly glad to learn that quite a few innovative models and equipment have been developed which would reduce the disadvantage of those of us who, for some reason or the other, are somehow handicapped.

Utilization of indigenous technology should be a key to success in many fields of our scientific and technological endeavours. This is not to suggest that we should close our eyes to the world outside. This is only to suggest that while learning from other countries and cultures, we



must look around, and look back if necessary. We should acquaint ourselves with our scientific heritage. No country would be self-sufficient by ignoring its heritage.

India has made great advances in science and technology during this decade. You all are well aware of our expedition to Antarctica where our scientists braved hostile climate and initiated explorations and research. Our multipurpose satellite INSAT-IB brings all of us so close. It helps today millions of farmers in planning their day-to-day farm activities. This is an example of science in service of the millions and millions. The nation is proud of the Kalpakkam Nuclear Power Plant—indigenously designed.

Looking at young faces here, this afternoon, I am sure that the future of science and technology in our country would be brighter than what it is today. And with little hesitation I say that these modest efforts of yours, through science exhibitions, would make a great contribution towards that future.

Science is not only a body of knowledge—it is also a means of acquiring knowledge. Today we are facing many-sided challenges political, economic, social and cultural. Let science be your watchword to face these challenges and build a more prosperous India.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the National Council of Educational Research and Training on their continuous efforts in promoting the cause of science throughout the country. I sincerely thank the people and the Government of Rajasthan for their hospitality. I have great pleasure in inaugurating the fourteenth National Science Exhibition for Children.

## Widening Mental Vision

IT GIVES ME immense pleasure to be here today and associate myself with the first convocation of Guru Ghasidas University. This University, I feel, is unique for two reasons. Firstly, located in an area predominantly inhabited by adivasis, this can be instrumental in promoting and disseminating ideas for revolutionary changes in society, so that the adivasis and other weaker sections can get a better deal in life. Secondly, it has been named after the great saint and social reformer Guru Ghasidas, who brought awakening among the backward and down-trodden people of this region during the eighteenth century. Like many social reformers and saints in other parts of our motherland, Guru Ghasidas revolted against the rigidity and inequities of the social system and strove unceasingly for the upliftment of backward and down-trodden sections of the people. I feel heartened to know that the ideals for which Guru Ghasidas lived and struggled in his life time have been taken as the source of inspiration and guidance for this University. I do hope that students coming out from the portals of this University will be inspired by the saintliness and revolutionary social outlook of Guru Ghasidas and try to live upto his ideals in daily life. I would like to congratulate the University on having named itself after Guru Ghasidas to perpetuate his memory and spread the message of his life and teachings. I also congratulate the University for conferring the Honorary Degree of D.Litt. to Pandit Mukutdhar Pandey, a renowned poet and popular literate.

As I have already mentioned, this is a unique university having been located in an area largely inhabited by adivasis. I have visited adivasis in their homes in many parts of our country. Adivasis, as the very name shows, are the original inhabitants. But however, it is surprising how they are segregated and exploited in society. They are vibrant with music and dance and constitute the proud heritage of India. There have been others like Guru Ghasidas, in many parts of the country inhabited by adivasis, who worked for their awakening and

upliftment. A lot of effort has been made since Independence to uplift adivasis so as to bring them into the mainstream of country's life. In our Five Year Plans special emphasis is given to schemes of their welfare. It can be said that lack of education was mainly responsible for the wide gulf between adivasis and others which gave rise to other evils like segregation and exploitation. We are heavily indebted to adivasis for much of our cultural heritage and there is a responsibility on our shoulders to spread education among them, which alone can put an end to all other evils. Situated in a predominantly adivasis area and named after Guru Ghasidas, I hope that this university will put forth special and extra efforts to bring awakening in them.

University education, as the very name indicates, is concerned with higher learning of arts and sciences. Its scope is universal. It not only imparts learning, it seeks to create among the students a thirst for knowledge and a desire to extend the frontiers of knowledge through research and experiment. It is meant to broaden the outlook of the student so as to embrace the whole universe. Looked at that way, it is meant to strengthen the bonds of unity in the world, based on universal and eternal values like truth, love, compassion and service. Education should aim, in addition to enabling one to stand on one's own legs for eking out livelihood, at the development of character, stimulation of interest and widening of mental vision. These are the essential values which education should inculcate in every student. This type of education alone will prepare the student to face life with all its complexities. The famous saying that man lives not by bread alone should not be forgotten. The realisation of inner divinity in every manifestation and the essential unity that exists in nature despite all its diversity should be the basis of higher education, which helps in bringing out unity in thought and truthfulness in action. Education must prepare the student to face life with honesty and courage. It must help him to grow as an individual to his utmost potential, and at the same time he must learn to see himself as a member of the society and interact in a creative way with the challenges thrown up by society.

It is essential to strike a balance between the aspirations of the individual and the demands of the society. Any imbalance in this regard creates a kind of mal-adjustment making to mental pollution that is as much dangerous to mankind as pollution of atmosphere. It is heartening to find that the dangers of atmospheric pollution and the need to rectify the situation has been well recognised throughout the world and global efforts are being made to protect, preserve and

enrich the natural environment. In the same way, there is a greater need to realise the dangers arising out of mental pollution of mankind and the necessity to take urgent steps to rectify this imbalance so as to preserve peace in the world and protect the mankind. In this context, I would like to quote Swami Vivekananda when he said that "The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of lion. Is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs". Swami Vivekananda meant that education should enable everyone to stand on his own legs not only in terms of materialistic needs but spiritual needs also. A combination, a blend of these two, is beneficial to mankind. The whole education system, not to speak of University education alone, should aim to bring out the intimate connection and close relationship between the mind of the individual and the moving spirit of the universe. This makes it necessary to orient the whole education system so as to have a balanced growth of the individual as a useful member of the society.

We should strive to evolve a sound education. This is a problem not only before India but before all nations in the world. The progress of science and technology is such that there is no alternative to peace because a war by nuclear arms will annihilate the whole humanity. The knowledge and skills acquired through science and technology should be utilised for the welfare and benefit of humanity as a whole, not for its own destruction. Man should not become his own enemy and destroyer. The importance of value oriented education needs no special emphasis in a world full of rivalries arising out of anger, greed, jealousy and hatred. They must be replaced by love, respect, tolerance and service. Wars are fought basically in the minds of men, and therefore, defences of peace must also be built in the minds of men. The means to do this can be provided by education of the right kind. Victories in the struggle to achieve peace are more glorious and abiding than victories obtained in the battlefield. This simple truth must be ingrained in the human mind through education at all levels.

India has attained an independent status and acquired a voice in the world, because of her consistent and principled policies for peace in the world. Though we have progressed much, there is still a lot to be done, in the direction of removing poverty, hunger, ignorance and disease. The launching of the Seventh Five Year Plan amidst rising expectations of the people assumes more than usual significance in this

context. The forces that are being generated by fast changing developments in science and technology offer us infinite scope to transform human life for the better. The pace of progress in our country is about to attain greater momentum as we forge ahead with our plans of economic development and social transformation. While giving to science and technology the place of pride in our development strategy, we must not forget the spiritual values which have sustained the people of this country through ages, and which need to be fully harnessed to give strength and direction to our national efforts. I am glad to know that the motto of the University *Gyan Panth Kirpan Ke Dhara* gives us this inspiration. To achieve knowledge is a difficult task and the students should be prepared to follow this path.

To the new graduates who are receiving their degrees today, I convey my congratulations and best wishes. Let their academic accomplishments in the University and their worthy endeavours in practical life serve as good examples for other batches of students in later years and, help to develop a sound tradition for this University.

## Drive Out Ignorance

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today and to associate myself with the Centenary Celebrations of the Andhra Christian College. I am very glad that this institution has rendered valuable services to the cause of education over the last one hundred years. Its management deserves to be congratulated for this. The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the setting up of many educational institutions in different parts of the country which in turn have served as catalysts and helped in the establishment of many more educational institutions. This is an appropriate occasion for the college to recall its proud achievements and plan for the future.

“Education for all” should be the goal of our endeavours as it alone helps in driving away ignorance which breeds all other social evils. It is with this noble objective that high priority has been given to education in our socio-economic development plans after independence. We have made considerable progress and a good deal of credit should also go to the many private educational institutions who have done pioneering work.

Education should aim at developing fully integrated personalities imbued with high ideals of love, compassion, truth and service. The things taught in schools and colleges provide the means of education but not education itself. Real education starts at the mother's feet and every word spoken within the hearsay of little children tends towards the formation of character. Viewed from this larger perspective, the aim of education is not merely to provide the students with a passport for employment but is to contribute for the development of human mind and its infinite faculties. Real education consists not merely in preparing graduates for the employment market but in creating citizens imbued with social consciousness and human values. We cannot call it education if it cannot contribute for the growth and development of a society on harmonious lines. This is a continuous process and college education is an important stage in the life of an individual.

India is a vast country inhabited by people belonging to different faiths and speaking different languages. But a spirit of unity and oneness pervades the whole country. There is unity in diversity. Education should aim at strengthening these bonds of unity and oneness. Before independence, the spirit of freedom movement had influenced the educated classes. Now the task before us is not only to strive for the development of the country but also to protect, preserve and strengthen the unity and integrity of the country.

We have made rapid strides in science and technology and our educational institutions have contributed significantly to this process. Indian engineers, doctors, scientists and technologists are working in many countries including highly developed countries like USA, UK which speaks of the excellence achieved in many branches of modern education. While striving to improve quality, enormous efforts have also been made to spread education among the hitherto neglected sections of population. This needs to be pursued more vigorously to ensure that even the people residing in the remotest areas of our country get the benefit of education and get their share of the opportunities for serving the country in a meaningful way.

I feel heartened to know that the Andhra Christian College has made rich contribution to the cause of education in this part of the country. I hope that it will continue to serve the people with greater dedication and devotion. I wish the College all success in its noble endeavours.

With these few words, I thank the Principal for inviting me here today.

## An Integrated Health System

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here once again in this beautiful state amidst the most colourful and hospitable people. At the outset, let me thank you and your Chief Minister for inviting me to this important occasion in the history of the Guwahati Medical College and Hospital. I should like to congratulate the Government, the students and the inmates of the College and Hospital, and offer my greetings to the people of the State. I am sure that these twenty-five years have enriched the medical infrastructure in the State of Assam. Large numbers of your alumni might have gone out to all parts of our land and have made a niche for themselves in the hearts of the people whom they are serving.

An occasion like the Silver Jubilee Celebrations provides an opportunity to reflect on what has been accomplished so far and to plan out new strategies to make the great task of education more meaningful and relevant to our needs.

Great progress has been made in the field of health all over the world. We have witnessed many miracles of modern medicine. However what is paradoxical is the fact that these developments yet do not mean much to large sections of the world's population who are poor and ignorant. A vast majority of them have no access to health services. I am aware that there are several inter-related problems affecting health and economic prosperity, malnutrition, infections and it should be our endeavour to tackle them systematically.

During the last few decades after Independence, impressive and substantial progress has been achieved in the field of health in our country. Certain diseases like malaria have been controlled; some communicable diseases like small-pox is no longer a problem; infant mortality has declined considerably and life expectancy has gone up. A fairly extensive network of health centres, dispensaries, hospitals, as well as institutions of higher learning and work have come up; a huge stock of medical and health personnel has become available;



significant indigenous capacity has been established for drugs and pharmaceutical industry, vaccine, sera and hospital equipments. There is no doubt that these and many other advances are in the right direction and one has every right to feel proud of these achievements.

At the same time, we have to remember that the high rate of population growth continues to have an adverse effect on the health of our people and quality of their life. We have endorsed family planning as an integral part of our development strategy, acknowledging its contribution to the health of the woman and the children. In this context, I would like to draw the attention of all medical personnel to the urgent need to spread the concept of planned parenthood among all sections of the people. Good health is closely connected with the provision of minimum needs like safe drinking water, nutritious food and a health cover with access to all available medical facilities. Other factors contributing to good health are also there like education, shelter and development of a sound and healthy environment.

Traditionally medicine has been viewed not only as the art of healing the sick but as a preventive also. Our ancestors held that health is not merely the absence of illness, but a glowing dynamic vitality, a feeling of wholeness with a capacity for continuous intellectual and spiritual growth. This is our heritage, conceptually developed and perfected in 'Ayurveda' which shows that our elders subscribed to a fully integrated health system which took into account all aspects of life from birth to death. Everybody subscribes to the age-old saying that prevention is better than cure. This is more true in the field of medicine. Medical personnel should concentrate more on preventive aspects of medicine and help in reducing man's vulnerability to disease. Health and development are inseparable as good health results from development and development will be faster in a healthy society. Our country is committed to attaining the goal of "Health for All by Year 2000 AD," and have drawn up a comprehensive health policy. The State Governments have a great responsibility in implementing the National Health Policy.

Since Independence, we are striving to achieve economic development through Five Year Plans. We have just launched the Seventh Five Year Plan. Institutions like yours can play a vital role and a great deal will depend on how you shoulder additional responsibilities voluntarily. The effectiveness of health care services depends on the nature of education, training and suitable orientation towards community health. It is very important that your education,

your training, your skills and your attitude are oriented to the needs and priorities. Primary health care approach requires what may seem to be revolutionary measures in health care and in medical education and research. Medical Colleges could become important partners with Government and people in this field. You can play a crucial role in ensuring the scientific soundness of the primary health care approach and in its social acceptability. Doctors of the future should be involved in extending health care coverage to the hitherto neglected, vulnerable and high risk groups. They will, of course, need to have to demonstrate a high level of clinical competence. The new role and functions will demand new forms of medical practices, including multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach. I feel that the new doctor will have to play a bigger role in the life of community.

I understand yours is one of the prominent Medical Colleges of the country and a premier one in this region of the country. You have served the country well and many of you have won distinction. My congratulations to you all for your achievements. I am sure the Government will find more ways to help you in your endeavours for the benefit of all so that the college and hospital become one of the foremost in terms of scholarship, service, research and a modern apex referral in the country.

I would like the doctor to become, not merely a competent physician and surgeon but an instrument for the promotion of total health development. It is also my fond hope that your work in the coming years will be more significant and beneficial.

May you be proud of your work and may the country be proud of you.

May this College have a personality of its own and keep up the high ideals of service and dedication.

## Cause and Commitment

I AM GRATEFUL to the University for inviting me to this Convocation. I should like, first of all, to congratulate the recipients of degrees and medals and to wish them all success in their careers. I need not stress that our country requires the skills and efforts of each one of you in its vast endeavour of economic and cultural reconstruction and I feel assured that those who are educated here, in this great institution, must have received the very best preparation for joining in this national endeavour.

In my youth I was trained in an altogether different school; in the school of toil and of freedom struggle. To me, for this very reason, an institution of higher education like yours, seems ever more valuable, something to be constantly cherished and nurtured. But when I think of Aligarh it also makes me think of its particular cause and commitment, which assign to it a special and valued position in our country.

For Aligarh symbolises the education, simultaneously to the dedication of a great community and also without any sense of contradiction, to the highest principles of secularism. This is what your illustrious founder, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, has educated to you and what he said on these matters should be a source of inspiration to all of us.

Let me just recall what Sir Syed said in 1884 at Gurdaspur, "Remember that Hindu and Musalman are words of religious significance, otherwise, Hindus, Musalmans and Christians who live in this country constitute one nation". Or his famous words at Patna in 1883, that "India is like a bride who has got two beautiful and lustrous eyes—Hindus and Musalmans". And he added: "All the privileges in the College which a student gets because of his being a Musalman, are without any restriction, provided to him, who calls himself a Hindu. There is no distinction between Hindus and Muslims."

This University, I am most happy to observe, is today a shining example of how people of all communities can live and work together

in friendship and amity. Even a casual visitor can notice this at Aligarh. in the naming of your colleges, halls and hostels, and in the way students of all faiths live together in the halls of residence. On a deeper scrutiny he will find that Aligarh is not only a centre of Muslim culture, it is also a great exponent of the composite culture of India.

Sir Syed did not simply want to spread modern education, he also wanted liberation from old taboos and prejudices. It is most gratifying to find that Aligarh has also played a significant role in promoting women's education. I should like to mention particularly the name of the late Sheikh Abdullah of Aligarh, an eminent educationist, who helped to found the Women's College at Aligarh, and whose services for women's education would always be recognised by a grateful nation.

It is your special endeavour to strengthen the bonds of the Aligarh *alumni*, who are spread all over the country, with their *alma mater*. It gives me particular pleasure to remember that the doyen of Punjab historians, Professor Ganda Singh, whom you gave a degree of Doctorate of Letters *honoris causa* many years ago, is sturdy Old Boy of this University. I also take this occasion to greet many students studying at your University who come from outside India. They are our guests and I trust that when they go back to their countries they will carry the message of sincere goodwill for Aligarh and for India.

This may have been said before, but it perhaps would always bear retelling; Aligarh has placed the entire nation in deep obligation by the great services rendered by its *alumni* to the national movement. I am sure most of you know the great names, Shibli Nomani, Mohammed Ali, Shaukat Ali, Hasrat Mohani, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Saifuddin Kichlew, Zakir Husain, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Tasadduq Husain Sherwani, Tufail Ahmad, K.M. Ashraf, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah of Kashmir... The list would be a long one, and selection is so difficult, what these *alumni* of yours did for the country's freedom can not in any case be easily encompassed in words, and I seek no more than to render a respectful homage to them here.

This University has been named in the Seventh Schedule of our Constitution, in recognition of its special position as a national institution. By the Acts of 1951 and 1981, Parliament has tried to provide a structure for the University, which best suits its nature and purpose. I am happy to note that since Independence the University has expanded tremendously, and I have no doubt that the solicitude of the Government of India and the University Grants Commission for your University will continue.

I always feel that students represent the cream of the nation and every effort should be made to allow them to develop freely as full-fledged citizens and play their role in the development of our country. For this it is essential that they should be away from political parties. The tendency on the part of political parties to interfere in student unions and exploit them for their political ends should be stopped so as to enable the students to pursue their studies with concentration in an uninterrupted manner. Also this will put an end to many ills that are afflicting our educational institutions. Therefore, I suggest to all political parties in the country to evolve a code of conduct so as to avoid utilising students for their political purposes.

Although no statutory financial responsibility for this University rests on the Government of Uttar Pradesh, I find that the State Government too fully realises the importance of your institution. It is gratifying to find from your report, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, that the State Government has given you a grant of Rs. 10 lakhs for additions to the Maulana Azad Library, and that it has made a special provision for continuous supply of electric power to the University.

I should add here that the AMU and the Banaras Hindu University are the two major Central Universities located in U.P. I understand that both Universities have been examining ways of furthering cooperation between themselves, and that some steps, e.g. in sports, have already been taken. I hope that together the two universities will score brilliantly in the field of sports and set an example for others.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, as I was listening to your report containing references to the plans of expansion that the university has prepared, I was particularly interested to hear of plans for the promotion of post-graduate and undergraduate education in agricultural sciences. Agriculture is the mainstay of our economy and growth of this sector is essential for attaining around self-sufficiency, especially in foodgrains. I know that Universities and learned institutions can render great help in developing our agricultural and industrial technology. Our population is increasing faster than the growth in other fields like education and it is highly necessary to check the rate of population growth. Then only our endeavours in the field of education will be successful. If the growth of population is not checked all our efforts will end in failure. I am confident that in this endeavour you will receive all appropriate cooperation and assistance from the Government of India and the University Grants Commission.

Your report for the year has also told us, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, of a

Our great saints, gurus, incarnations and thinkers pleaded for this spiritual and mental unity. The *Upanishads* hold that soul is the manifestation of God. Buddhism exhorts for peace and service of the sufferers. Jainism teaches non-violence and self-discipline. According to Sikh religion, the purpose of coming to this world is achieving God: and that one should make sacrifices for the sake of others. Christianity also preaches to love one's neighbour. Islam gives the message of such a universal brotherhood where there is no distinction between man and man on the basis of cast and creed. In this way all the religions teach the same principle of love, sympathy, tolerance and brotherhood. In modern times faith in religion is as much important as it ever was. The only difference is that the development of Science, Technology and Communication system has reduced the geographical distances into non-entity. There is a race in nations for economic development. Spiritual values and moral ideals are going in the background. The living habits in society are changing fast. In this situation religion is the only basis which can save the human society from break-up and purposelessness.

I wish to appeal to all the religious leaders to inform the people about importance of values like love, peace, tolerance, patience, sympathy and brotherhood. It is a great fortune for our country to possess the treasure of the teachings of all the great religions of the world. All that is needed to make the appropriate use of it. If we preach and practice these teachings in the right spirit, then our country can once again, like its old tradition, become the spiritual leader of the world.

I am glad that you have organised this Seminar under the auspices of Shri Ramakrishna Mission to meet this great need of the hour. I am sure that the discussions and suggestions made will contribute immensely towards establishing spiritual unity in our country. The voice of religions raised from here can help in crushing the divisive forces in our country and in forging the spirit of unity amongst all its people. This only would be the true service of all religions.

I give you my best wishes for the success of your Seminar and gladly declare it open.

## Fame and Influence

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here amidst you all and associate myself with this function. We in India regard Valmiki as the first ever poet of the world, and it is fitting that this is named after him.

Poets of India and the World! your collective presence here today makes both this day and place a hallowed one. We are deeply aware that the voice of poetry is the voice of the soul.

Poets of the world! I greet you on behalf of the people of India. In doing so, I recall the Indian tradition which conceded to the poet, long ago, the pride of place in society. Poets are known to have sit side by side with kings and emperors whose courts they adorned. Royalty was not however content with mere patronage; personal and direct access to the Muses has been characteristic of many a ruler. Thus, King Bhoja lives in the memory of those who are devoted to art and literature, rather than in the mind of the chroniclers of history.

The poet enjoyed a unique status that lent power to the words of his counsel who was ever at hand to advise, unmindful of the consequences that might flow, when bitter truth was spoken bravely. Poets could speak without fear, for they sought nothing. It is they who were sought after, by those who wished to temper their own power with sanity, humanity and universality. There is another tradition away from palaces, poets have chosen to remain recluse. The tradition of poet-saints is strong in India.

Everywhere poets are beyond time and space. They speak the same language, irrespective of the dialect that they use it is the language of the heart. Sensitive response to the joy of life and the sorrow thereof, an integral view of Nature, an eye for beauty and charm in everything around, the capacity for indignant protest when the human spirit is wronged, and so on, can all be seen reflected in this language of the heart. It is universal. Boundaries of land and sea cannot contain this soulful utterance, which has its root in extraordinary concern for values in life. Thus it is that Plato is remembered more than Caesar, and Shakespeare more than the builders of the British Empire. While

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Speech on the occasion of the Valmiki Poetry Festival, New Delhi, March 1, 1985

empires dwindle and perish in course of time, poets grow in fame and influence.

It is that fame, which each one of you has richly earned, that has brought you here. It is your influence that this country will experience in the next few days of your stay here, when the timeless voice of poetry will echo in the halls of the learned and the sensitive. Those who listen to poetry must indeed respond with sensitivity. The Indian tradition cherishes the role of the *rasika*.

I am happy that this Festival is dedicated to and named after Valmiki. Our literary tradition recognises him as *adi kavi* the primeval poet. As many of you know, his epic narrative, Ramayana in Sanskrit is India's most ancient classic, which dates back almost to the dawn of the bardic tradition. What is remarkable, however, is that it is ancient and contemporary as well. For, it is part of a living tradition people all over India recite passages from Valmiki everyday.

Valmiki is universal. His classic was powerful enough to travel beyond the shores of India. By the sixth century A.D. it was known in South East Asia. Today, even in far-off Manchuria and Japan, the Ramayana is part of the national heritage. What is it that made this great work universal? Poetic excellence, no doubt. But the fundamental truth is that such poetry arose out of compassion. When Valmiki, the Saint, witnessed the unjust killing of an innocent bird, he turned into Valmiki the poet. His sorrow (*Soka*) led to poetry (*Sloka*). That is what is relevant in today's context; the voice of reason and justice deserves to be heard (in silent races) doing away with the din and dust of daily struggle. Valmiki's Ramayana is a mirror of eternal truths and an affirmation of moral values. It is the tranquility of a mature mind that makes the poem universal and timeless.

I have great pleasure in declaring this unique Festival open. If this meeting of sensitive minds and eloquent voices succeeds in energising the spirit of man, it will prove greatly more rewarding than formal conferences and seminars. I greet you once again and have pleasure in inaugurating this World Poetry festival.



## A Thriving Tradition

I AM EXTREMELY happy to be amidst you today when the nation has chosen to honour you for your outstanding craftsmanship and artistic endeavour. I am confident that the recognition bestowed on you will instill greater zeal and inspire you towards further artistic perfection. It is through your exquisite workmanship and dedication that the tradition of Indian handicrafts has been kept alive.

While handcrafted objects have catered to the tastes of the aristocracy and the nobility, they have also served the more humble needs of the common people in and around the centres of production. Each region of this vast and diverse country is characterised by its own traditions, its costumes, its language and its crafts. But no matter which part of the country a craft may be practised, what brings us together is the everlasting aesthetic beauty of our handicrafts. Today, if our country can be proud of its handicrafts, the credit should go, in no small measure to the numerous craftspersons all over the country. It is for us to see that these traditions thrive and flourish. Our main attention should, therefore, be towards the welfare and well being of the craftspersons, majority of whom carry on their work in their humble cottages. All our welfare measures should reach this segment of the society so that they become economically stronger.

Handicrafts with its labour intensive character constitutes an important economic activity and possess vast potential for generating employment particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. The All India Handlooms and Handicrafts Board constituted by Government of India has been consistently encouraging and guiding the development of this sector and the artisan community. The festivals of India conducted during these four years have not only succeeded in bringing about a renewed appreciation of our arts and crafts but have also initiated a new chapter of goodwill between craft loving nations. I do sincerely hope that with the increase in demand for our handicrafts both in the domestic and international markets our craftspersons will be benefitted and get a fair return for their skill and creative effort.

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Speech on the presentation of National Awards for Master-Craftsmen 1984 and 1985, New Delhi, October 20, 1986

I have no doubt that the market potential for handicrafts is much more than what we have been able to tap so far. This requires a more systematic and continuous effort at gathering market intelligence, developing new designs, providing efficient linkages and creating necessary infrastructure for faster production. All this will have to be done keeping in view the paramount need to help the artisan to reduce his costs and secure for him due share. The fundamental objective of increasing the income and purchasing power of artisans should not be lost sight of in the glitter of international markets, fairs, festivals and exhibitions.

The National Awards for master-craftspersons have been instituted by the Government to honour and give recognition to outstanding craftspersons for their skill and excellence. The recognition, I am sure, will stimulate individual interest in all aspects of Indian Crafts and Culture which are of vital contemporary interest, not only in India itself but all over the world in terms of the current search for human values. In addition to giving national recognition, sustained efforts have to be made, to identify the problems faced by craftspersons and to devise solutions. It is heartening to note that the Central and State Governments as well as the handicrafts Corporations in the different States and Union Territories have been taking steps to meet these requirements. I wish the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts all success in its endeavour to ensure that the craft traditions of our country are suitably adapted to the needs of a growing market within the country and abroad.

I once again congratulate our master-craftspersons who have received the National Awards today and do sincerely hope that they will continue to strive for excellence.

I wish our handicrafts industry continued prosperity and progress.

## A Notable Task

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to visit the holy town of Tirupati and to give away the awards instituted by the Academy of Fine Arts. Since its establishment, just two years ago, the Academy has undertaken notable tasks. The eight personalities being honoured today, come from different fields like Music, Dance, Theatre, Literature, Films, Sports and Science & Technology. All of them have made valuable contributions in their respective fields of activity. I heartily felicitate the Academy and the award winners.

Our country is rich in fine arts and is highly fortunate to have inherited a colourful cultural heritage. Our fine arts have transcended the boundaries of region, religion and language and have lent beauty and splendour to the composite culture of India. It has given us a place of honour and pride in the world. No doubt classical music, dance, films and theatre have an important place in our life, yet our folk songs, folk dances, folk theatre and folk tales have a unique importance in our cultural ethos.

National Unity and cultural exchanges have close relationship. Classical dances like Bharat Natyam, Kathak, Kathakali, Manipuri and Odissi have earned fame not only in various parts of India but also in the world at large. These dances and the Hindustani and Karnatak schools of music are an important link in forging emotional unity among our people. It is a matter of happiness that the Academy of Fine Arts with a national approach have decided to give awards to well-known personalities from various parts of the country. This Academy has undertaken an onerous task of preserving, developing and encouraging fine arts to perpetuate the beauty of our culture. I do hope that the activities of this Academy will create a new awakening in the minds of the people and the standard of creative arts will be further improved. I feel that if such Academies function in a spirit of selfless service in various parts of the country, these can be very helpful in forging unity among our people.

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Speech on the occasion of giving away the Academy of Fine Arts National Awards  
Tirupati April 6, 1987

I would like to suggest that the Academy invites artists, musicians, theatre experts, scientists etc. from other parts of the country from time to time, who could have exchanges with the maestros and experts of this State. Such exchanges arranged by the Academies of different States would allow the artists to give performances in other parts of the country, which would also give an opportunity to our people in the villages and towns to benefit from them. Which would again generate a spirit of national unity.

In the modern age, life is full of pressures and tensions and fine arts like music, dance and theatre provide a great relief from monotony of life. Performances of arts should not remain confined to metropolises and bigger towns, but ample opportunities should be available to commonman in the interior areas to find relaxation and happiness.

Such organisations do need the patronage of governments, wealthy people and industrialists, as funds are very important for these activities. But I do feel that the area of membership participation in such activities should be so widened as to throw open the opportunities to the commonman to allow him to make his small contributions. I would like to suggest once again that we should pay greater attention to our folk arts. Those living in rural areas are in fact responsible for preserving our folk culture. They should receive proper encouragement lest in the tensions and hustle and bustle of life, they continue to be ground in the mill of poverty and forget their arts. That would mean colossal loss to the nation.

Politics today is becoming more and more difficult and complicated. In all probability, leaders would not have enough time to devote to cultural activities. As such it is for the voluntary organisations to come forward and the commonman to offer his mite to preserve our arts and culture to preserve sacred cultural heritage of the country.

I felicitate the organisers of this colourful function and feel gratified to have been able to spend the evening at the feet of Lord Venkateshwara. I pray that the Lord may grant happiness, prosperity and strength to all the people of India and bestow upon them the intellect and wisdom to serve the country in the interest of national unity and integrity, human equality, brotherhood, compassion, contentment and maximum hardwork and enterprise for the glory of the nation.

# **India and the World**

## Vistas of Cooperation

ON BEHALF OF the Government and the people of India, I extend to you, Mr. President, and the distinguished members of your party, a most cordial welcome to India. Our pleasure is all the more because India is the first country you are visiting in Asia. This underscores the traditional bonds of friendship and affinity between our two countries as well as the mutual desire to give our relations further depth and dimension. Mexico may be situated half the world away from India, but in our hearts and mind we hold your country as our distant neighbour and close friend.

Your visit to India has coincided with a very significant declaration which India and Mexico have signed at the level of Heads of State and Government along with Argentina, Tanzania, Sweden and Greece. India and Mexico have consistently worked together in the international fora for promoting global disarmament and to accelerate the progress towards development of the developing countries in all the continents and regions of the world. At a time when dialogue on arms control is being resumed, the six-power initiative represents the timely voice of the people of all the regions and continents of the world. This needs to be heard, respected and acted upon.

For the developing world representing the overwhelming mass of humanity inhabiting the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America, who are in search of a new international economic order, there is the inextricable link between disarmament and development, and the imperative need of channelising more resources for the cause of development. Along with resumption of dialogue on disarmament it is essential to resume North-South dialogue with fresh vigour, renewed political will and commitment. The developing countries do not seek generosity or charity but the creation of opportunities through which they could bring to their people the benefits of resource development and economic advancement and at the same time

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Banquet Speech in honour of His Excellency Mr. Miguel De La Madrid Hurtado, President of the United Mexican States, January 29, 1985

contribute to the healthy growth of world trade and global interdependence. The Non-Aligned Movement of which India has the privilege to be the Chairman has already taken initiatives for the restructuring of the international economic and financial structures in order to root out the elements of growing instability in the global economic system.

Mr. President, I cherish very happy memories of my visit to your country last year and the fruitful exchange of views with you on global, regional as well as bilateral matters. I am glad to see that since then the Indo-Mexican Joint Economic Commission has met and worthwhile fields have been identified for industrial collaboration and promotion of trade exchanges. Your visit to India is also being followed, I am told, by a delegation of leading businessmen and industrialists from Mexico next month. I am confident that your visit to India and our talks will give further impetus to this most welcome trend of further cementing our political relations and consolidating and diversifying our cultural and economic exchanges.

In India we have just gone through our eighth National Elections which have shown once again that the roots of democracy are deep in our country as they are in yours and so is the tradition of political stability and continuity. A few months ago, we lost our beloved leader Indira Gandhi who sacrificed her life so that we could live as a secular and sovereign Republic and safeguard our unity and integrity. The ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, the vision of Jawaharlal Nehru and the path charted out by Indira Gandhi will be the beacon stars in guiding the new Government towards consolidating the foundations for an India of the 21st century.

Non-alignment which has emerged as a major dynamic force in international relations has been the bedrock of India's foreign policy ever since independence. The world is passing through difficult times and the fabric of peace and detente is fragile, disturbed now and then by conflicts here and there and an ever-escalating arms race. In our part of the world, it has been our consistent endeavour to build bridges of friendship and durable cooperation with all our neighbours and we have time and again rejected any effort—overt or covert—from outside for meddling in our affairs. We therefore appreciate your concern at the situation around you in Central America and have all along whole-heartedly supported your effort reflected in the Contadora initiative for a peaceful settlement without outside intervention. The dangers emanating from the failure or even

## Think Globally

I AM HAPPY to be amongst you, who have come from different parts of the country and the world to attend this Second Provisional World Parliament organised by the World Constitution and Parliament Association towards bringing a new world order.

World Order or a world perspective is not new to us in India. Our sages, saints, gurus and philosophers from time immemorial have affirmed *Vasudaiva Kutumbakam*, all humanity as one family. This is the essence of all religions which have proclaimed unity of God-head and universal brotherhood and we all are one.

A question naturally arises "why this strife, war and conflict all around"? why should man stress on differences and diversity and forget the essential unity in this apparent diversity? But history of mankind and evolutionary trends reveal that humanity is aspiring and fast progressing towards realising this essential unity.

Past evolution indicates that nature and its processes have created large and more complex aggregates from family to clan, clan to tribe, to city and to larger groups at different times and finally to national units.

The legitimate question is whether the nation, the largest natural unit which humanity has been able to create and maintain for its collective living, is also its last and ultimate unit, or whether a greater aggregate will be formed which will embrace many nations and finally all the nations. The present functioning of the United Nations is indicative of human endeavour in this direction.

There is another factor moving this process forward, namely the development of modern transport and communication, which is making humanity into one community, life is any part of the world affects life in the whole world in a way that was impossible at the beginning of this century. Yet each part of the world feels separate in its culture, political tendencies and economic behaviour, despite the repercussions of events and movements in other parts of this world. It is no longer possible for a part of the world to isolate itself from the world as a whole. In a way this is unity of humanity amidst diversity.

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Speech at inauguration of Second Provisional World Parliament organised by the World Constitution and Parliament Association, New Delhi, March 17, 1985



In this context, I would like to refer to what our late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi said from this very platform in 1981: "The world is becoming more and more inter-dependent". Development in communications, problems of equitable distribution of the world's natural resources and the common dangers posed by the increase in conventional and nuclear armaments demand that mankind must act as one. A just international order is inescapable necessity for man's survival".

As chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, India is working in cooperation with other nations to achieve a just world order based on equity and justice so as to reduce tensions and resolve conflicts between member states through peaceful means. The single most important challenge today is the threat of Nuclear War and I see on the agenda of your Parliament the bill to outlaw nuclear weapons. The leaders of Argentina, Greece, Mexico, Sweden, Tanzania and India collectively called upon the nuclear weapon States to declare a nuclear freeze and to substantially reduce nuclear stockpiles. Recently these leaders met in New Delhi to take further action to contain the nuclear threat. In this context the renewal of talks in Geneva between the two major powers, I hope, would lead to meaningful results.

Some global problems receiving attention in your deliberations, like problems of environmental deterioration and diminishing forests are of urgency and importance in our country also. The slogan, "Think globally, Act locally" is well reflected in your activities. The interdependence of nations is a basic fact of our times and international cooperation must be accepted as a necessity. For this purpose, non-government organisations such as this can play a concrete role. Your efforts to bring out a Constitution for the Federation of Earth are laudable.

It was said that "If you want peace upon earth, first establish peace in your heart. If you want unity in the world, first unify the different parts of your being". This saying is full of relevance and I do hope that the spirit of it will get an increasing measure of support and acceptance in the world. May your deliberations here prove to be a step forward in this direction.

With these few words, I conclude by thanking Shri Sat Paul Mittal Chairman of the Organising Committee for inviting me to open this Second Provisional World Parliament.

## Common Commitment

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome you to our country to which you are no stranger and to receive your Letters of Credence as High Commissioner for Malaysia to India. I wish you a very fruitful and enjoyable stay in our midst.

Your Excellency has referred to the friendly relations between our two countries rooted in the past, our common commitment to the ideals of democracy, secularism and international understanding and our desire for peace and development of all nations. Indeed our two countries have several things in common. Both are endeavouring to provide a life of dignity to their people, to establish a society based on social and economic justice and at the same time striving for peace, harmony and stability in our region as well as in the whole world which is so vital for progress of mankind. As members of Non-Aligned Movement, both firmly believe in international peace and understanding while every nation is able to shape its destiny in accordance with its national aims and objectives.

Over the years, there has been a constant improvement of relations between India and Malaysia in political, commercial, cultural and other fields. This is very encouraging and it would be our constant endeavour that in the years to come, these bilateral relations become warmer and stronger to our mutual benefit. We would welcome further consolidation of our bilateral ties and I assure you that my Government would extend full cooperation and support to Your Excellency in achieving this common objective.

May I avail of this opportunity to thank his Majesty the Yang Di Pertuan Agong of Malaysia for his warm sentiments and to request you to kindly convey to His Excellency my best wishes for his continued health and happiness and, on behalf of myself and the people of India, our best wishes for progress and prosperity of Government and people of your country.

## Shared Values

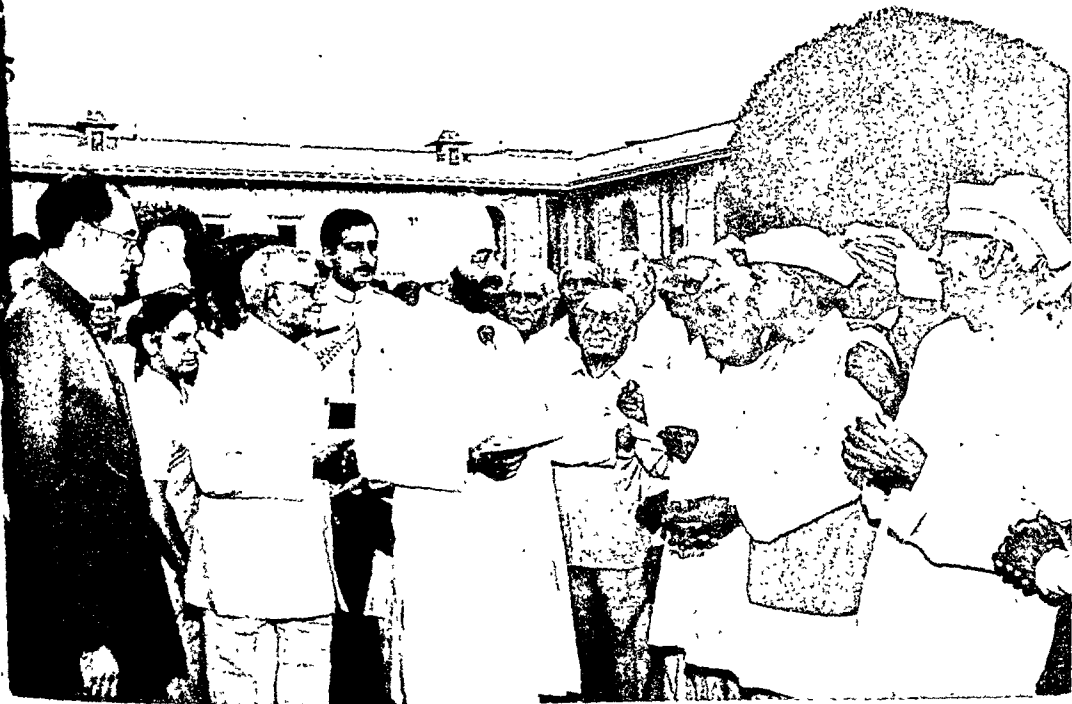
I HAVE GREAT pleasure in accepting the letters accrediting you as the Ambassador of the United States of America to India. I extend to you a warm welcome and hope you will have a useful and happy stay here.

The major issues of today are peace, development and disarmament. All of them have a bearing on the fate of our planet, and on the life of the peoples around the world. We believe that both of us can make an important contribution to world peace and prosperity if we are able to enhance mutual understanding, deepen friendship and promote cooperation. The values we share provide a strong basis for this.

Since independence, India has come a long way in building up a strong foundation for its political, economic and social institutions. It has addressed the task of nation building with determination and vigour. While the major inputs have come from our own resources, we are fully conscious of the economic and technological assistance we received from friends abroad. We recall with appreciation the important role played by the United States, notably in the agriculture sector. With the continuing growth of the Indian economy, there are now new opportunities for expanding bilateral cooperation. We see good scope for cooperation in the scientific and technological fields, and both of us need to take advantage of it.

Mr. Ambassador, your assignment is beginning at a time when there is high interest in and greater awareness of the prospects for establishing a firmer relationship between India and the United States. The successful visit of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to USA last summer, his discussions with President Reagan and senior officials of the Administration, the holding of the Festival of India, have given fresh impetus to the desire on both sides to strengthen bilateral relations. We have differences in perception and approach on some issues. But we still have enough in common to build a meaningful relationship. On our side, we are prepared to make the effort to

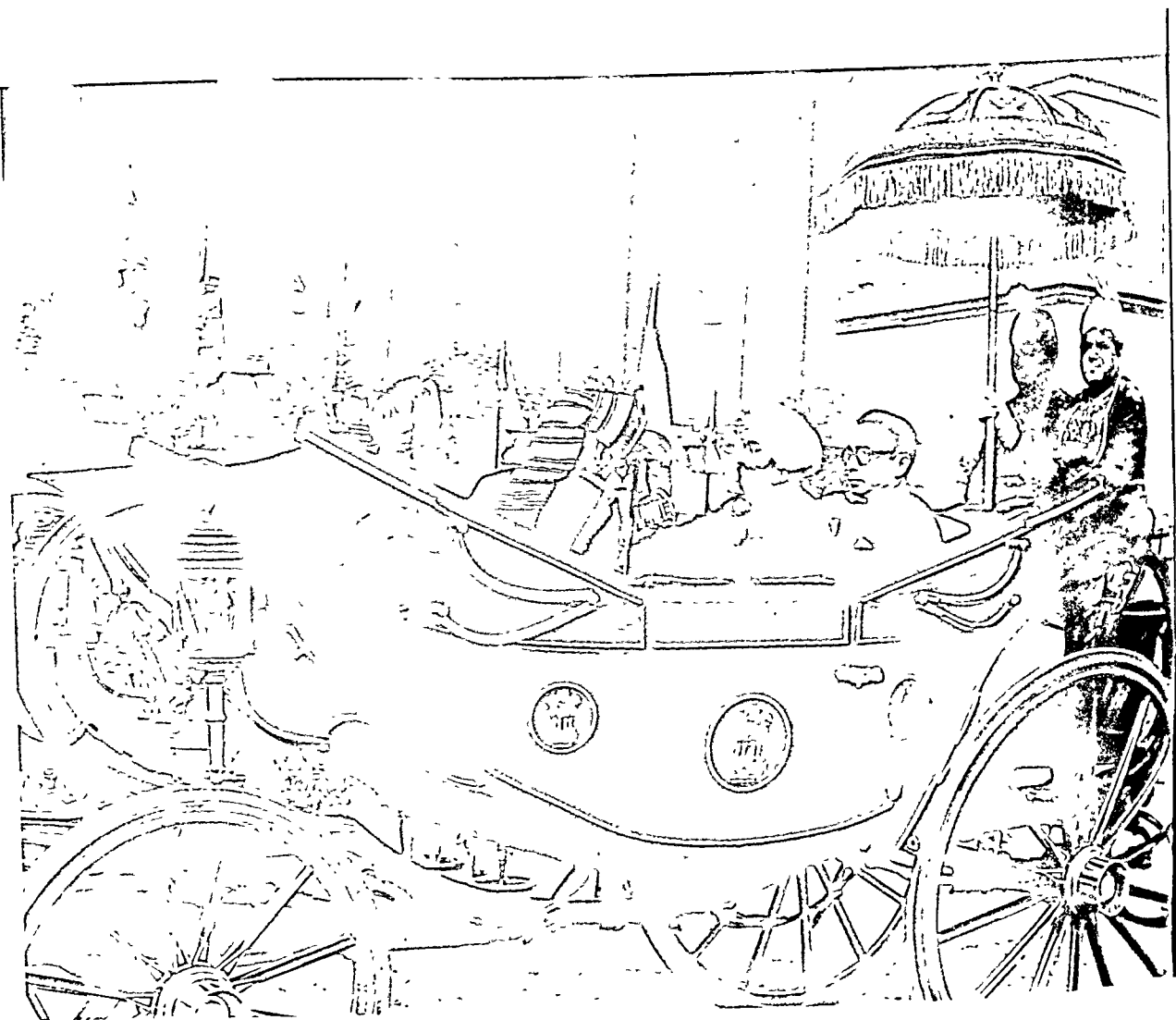
achieve this objective. We are convinced that better relations would serve the interests of both our peoples. In your endeavours to promote friendship and cooperation. I am sure you will find a positive response from the Government and people of India. I wish you success in your assignment.



*Meeting freedom fighters, August 14, 1986*



*Meeting opposition leaders at Rashtrapati Bhavan, February 19, 1986*



*Leaving to take salute at Republic Day Parade, January 26, 1986*



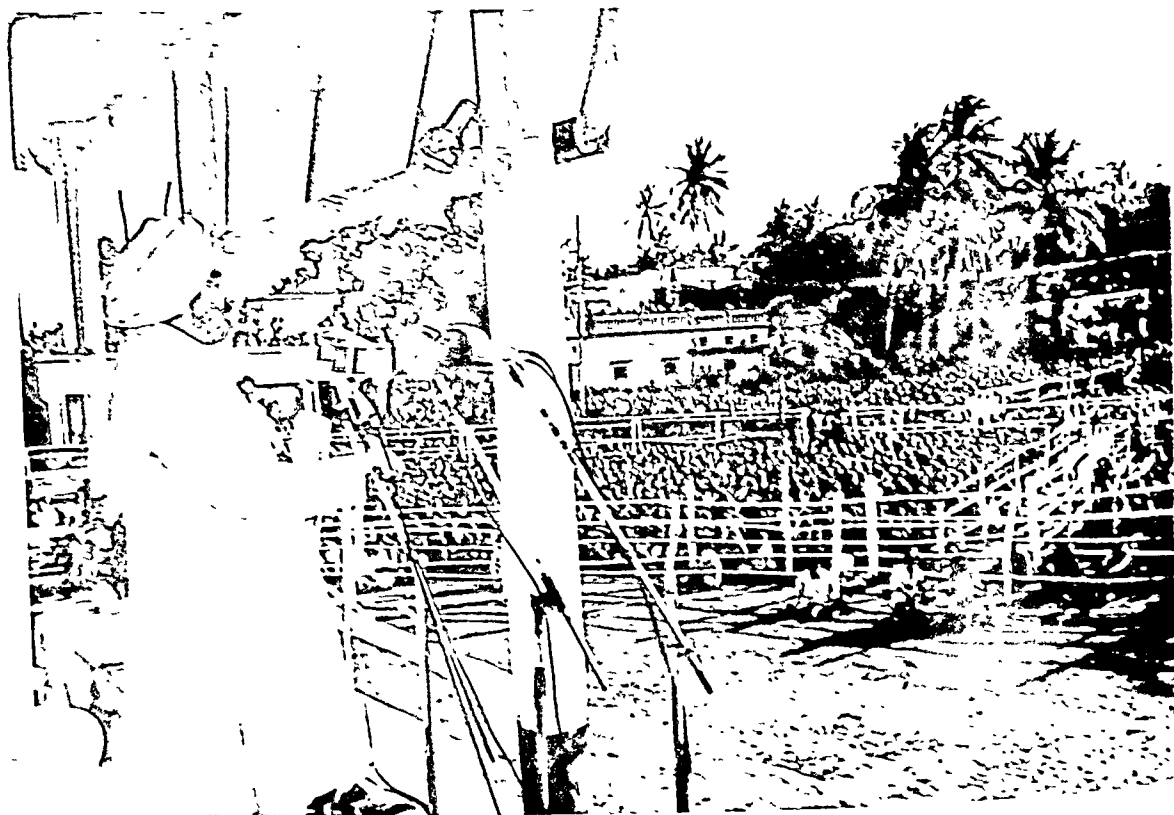
*Receiving credentials from H.E. Octavio Rainho Da Silva Neves, Ambassador of Brazil, New Delhi, February 27, 1987*



*Presented a baton to Field Marshall Cariappa April 28, 1986*

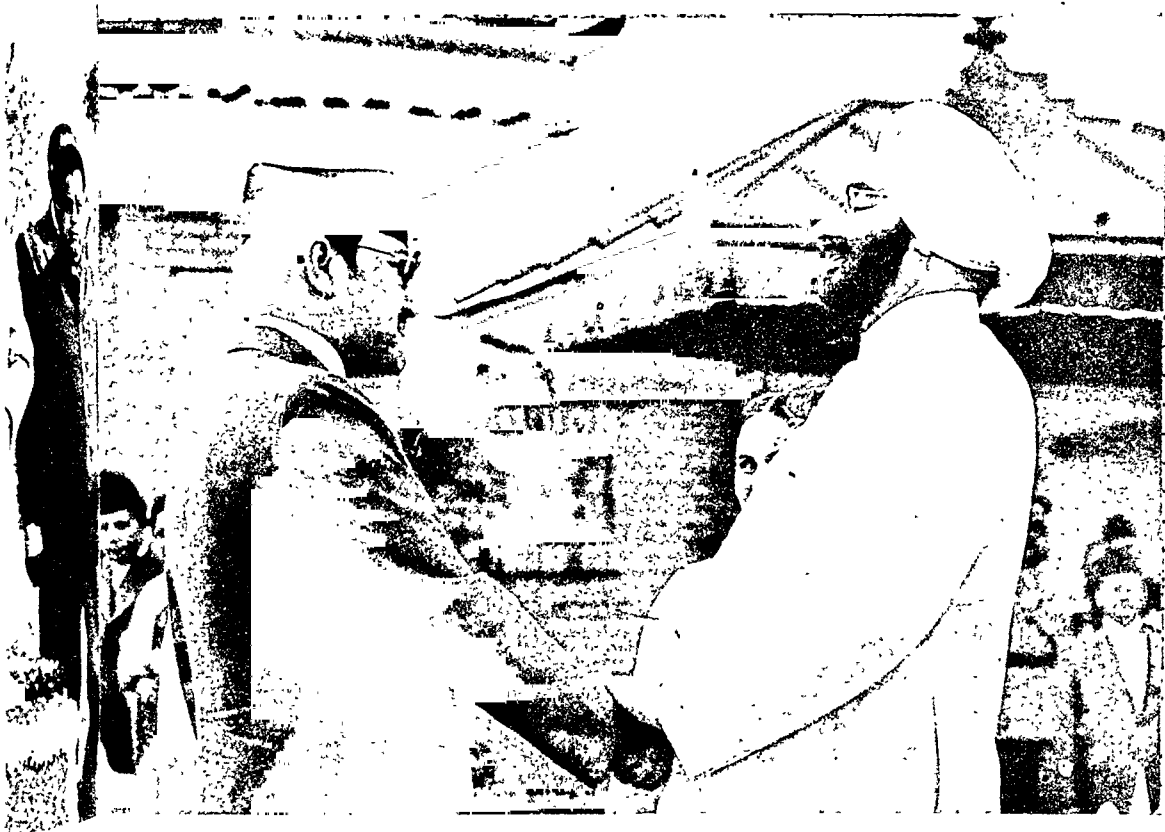


*Going around Vijay Ghat on Death Anniversary of Late P.M. Lal Bahadur Shastri,  
January 11, 1985*



*Addressing a public meeting, Puri, February 10, 1986*





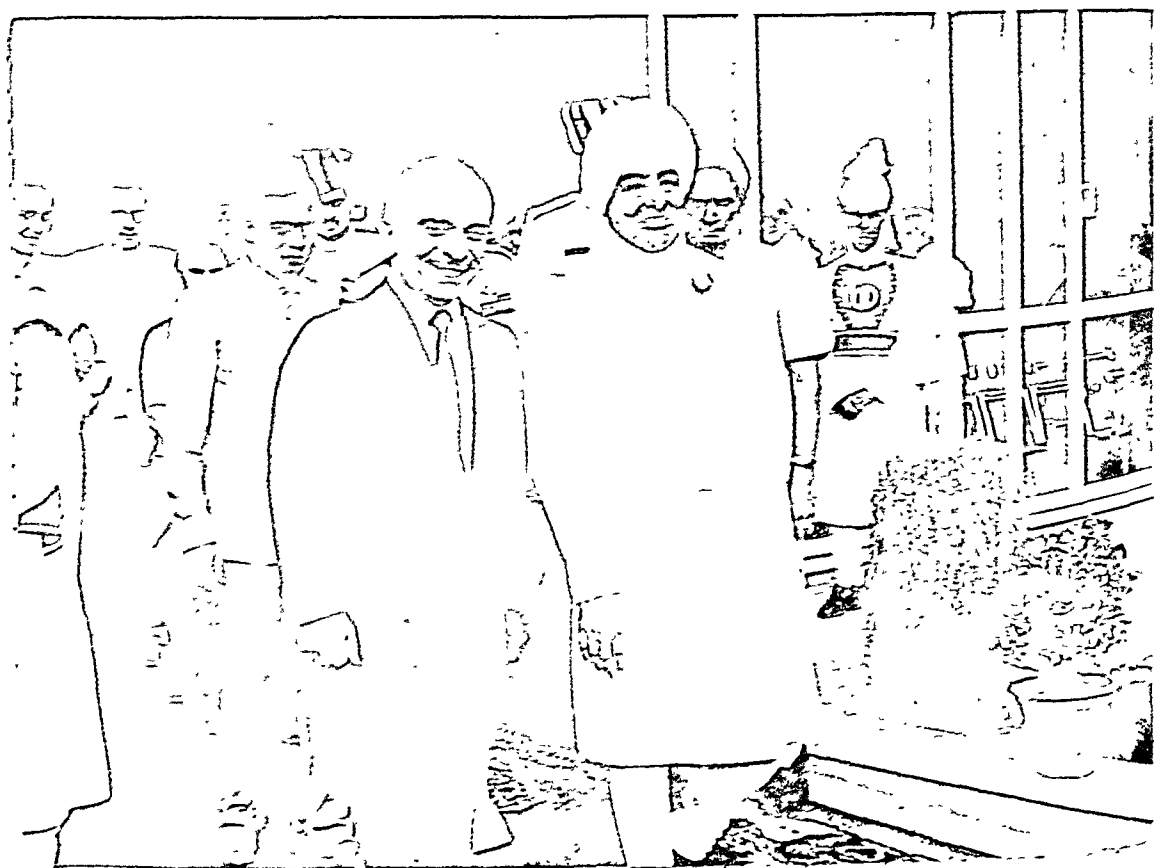
*Being seen off by His Majesty King Birendra Kathmandu, Kathmandu, July 25, 1986*



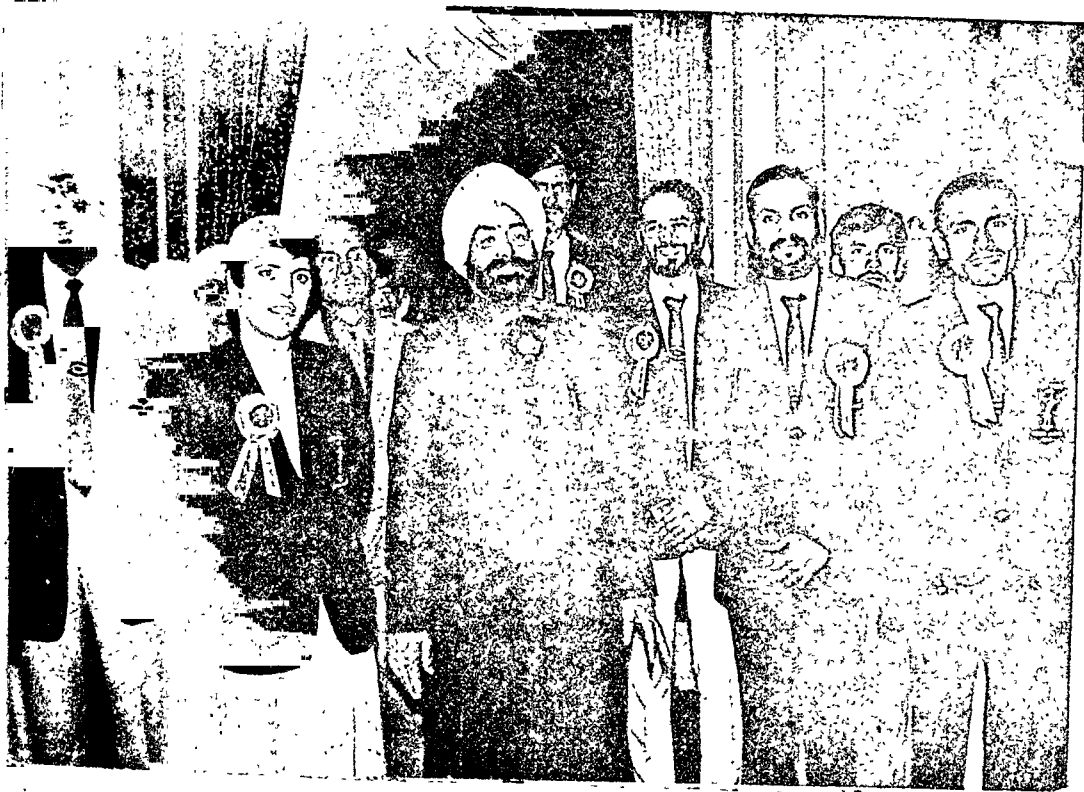
*In a banquet hosted by President of Yugoslavia, Belgrade, October 30, 1986*



*Enquiring about the health of ailing Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan at Bombay Hospital  
May 18, 1987*



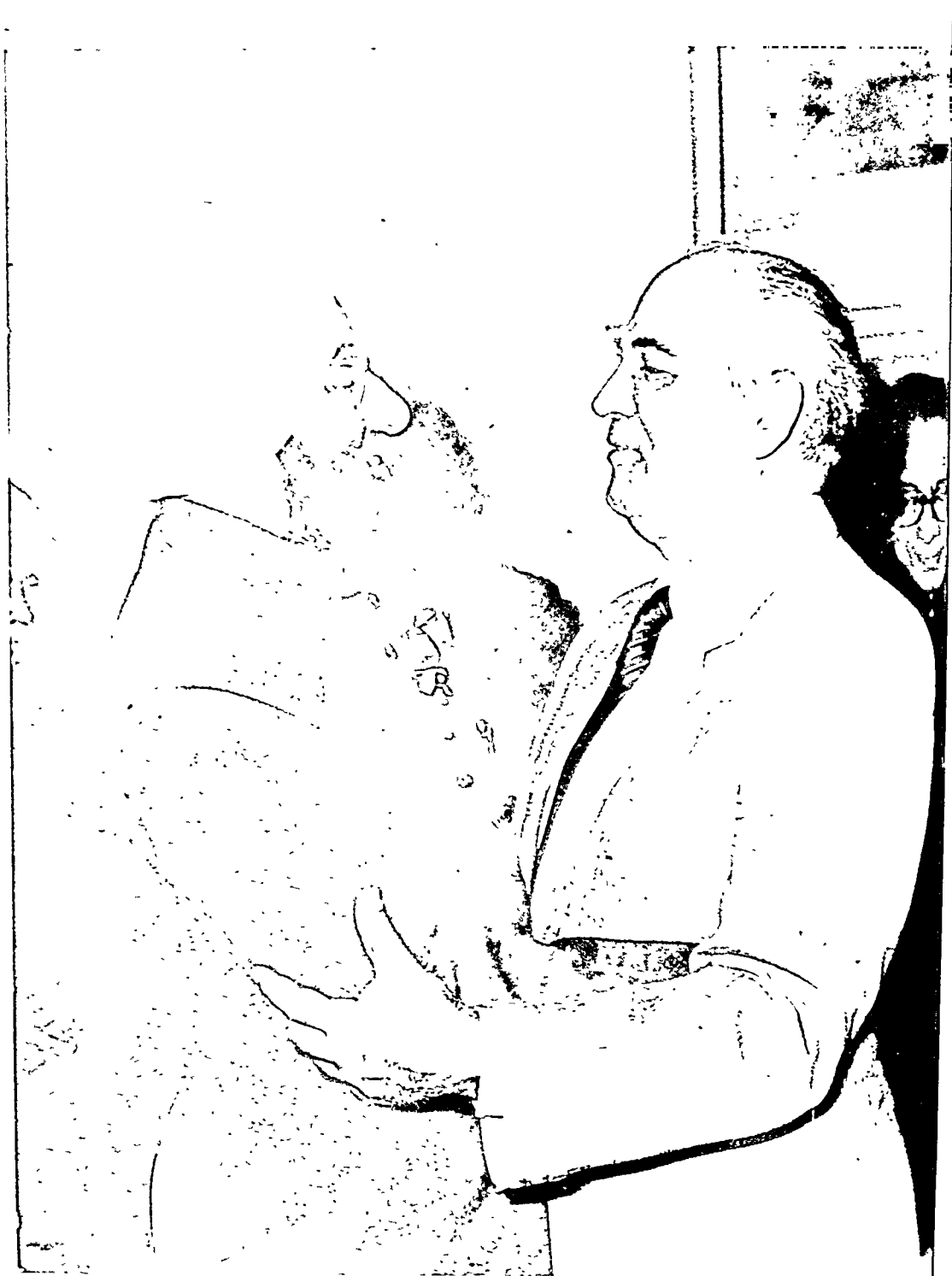
*Received King of Jordon, New Delhi, October 6, 1986*



*With recipients after Arjun Awards distribution ceremony, New Delhi, January 22, 1986*



*Amid recipients of Fine Arts Society (A.P) academy national awards, Tirupati, April 6, 1987.*



*Welcoming His Excellency Mikhail S. Gorbachev, New Delhi, November 26, 1986*

## India and Mongolia

IT GIVES ME great pleasure in welcoming you to India as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Mongolian People's Republic. Thank you for conveying the cordial greetings from His Excellency President Jambyn Batmunkh.

You are no stranger to India, having been here on two occasions earlier. Happily, your third assignment has commenced during the year which marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries. During these thirty years, significant economic and social developments have been made by your country, transforming Mongolia from a purely agrarian society to a modern state. As a fellow Asian country, we share with the people of Mongolia a sense of pride in their achievements.

Excellency, you are well aware of India's policy of non-alignment and our role in the international fora to contribute to peace, stability, harmony and prosperity in the world. We are committed to the basic ideals of peace and cooperation, to devote our energy and resources to secure for our people a better life, and to share, albeit in a modest way, the fruits of our economic and technological developments with other countries. I am sure you would have ample opportunity to see what we have achieved, since your last assignment here in the 'sixties.

Relations between India and Mongolia have been traditionally close and cordial with age-old cultural and historical ties. Despite the geographical distance which separates us, the two countries have had friendly contacts with each other from ancient times. In recent years, bilateral cooperation between us in the cultural, educational, economic, scientific and other fields, has gradually increased. Our two countries have cooperated closely with each other on important international issues.

While extending to you a warm welcome to our country once again, I would like to assure you that all possible assistance and cooperation will be extended by the Government of India in the effective discharge

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Speech at presentation of credentials by His Excellency Mr. O. Khosbayar, Ambassador-designate of the Mongolian people's Republic, New Delhi, October 15, 1985

of your responsibilities. I would also like to express the confidence that your efforts will further contribute to the enhancement and strengthening of the cordial and friendly relations which so happily exist between our two countries.

Please convey, Excellency, my warm greetings and good wishes to His Excellency President Jambyn Batmunkh and through him, to the Government and people of Mongolia.

I wish you a successful assignment in India and a pleasant stay.

## Symbol of World Peace

I AM PLEASED to be here today to preside over this function to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the United Nations. This event is being observed today at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York and around the world. In the 40 years of its existence, the United Nations has emerged as the symbol of international cooperation for the achievement of common ideals of peace and development. Both in the preservation of international peace and security and for promoting economic development, the contribution of the United Nations remains unparalleled. The UN and its vast umbrella of specialised agencies have carried the ideals of peace, cooperation and development into the far-flung corners of the globe.

The 40th anniversary of the United Nations provides an occasion for reaffirmation of faith of the nations of the world in the ideals of this world body. It is also an opportunity to seek ways and means for enhancing the effectiveness of the UN and reinvigorate international cooperation in all fields of human endeavour.

We in India believe that the United Nations represents the hope and the conscience of mankind in this nuclear age. Born amidst the ashes of the Second World War, it has grown in membership and in the area of its involvement to encompass virtually every sphere of human endeavour. Yet in its supervening task—that of preserving present and future generations from the scourge of war—the organisation remains handicapped by bloc rivalries and the contrary pressures of narrow nationalism. We must recognise that the United Nations is not a supranational organisation. It is merely an association of States. Its failings are in fact the failings of its members and reflect the absence of political will or inadequate commitment to its principles. Today, more than ever before, it is necessary for all nations and peoples to reaffirm their commitment to the Charter of the U.N. and to regenerate its political will.

India is a founder member of the United Nations and has maintained close association and involvement in all areas of its

activity. We have also been in the forefront of the international effort at the United Nations to mark the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the UN. Can we not make this occasion a starting point of a united endeavour to give mankind the blessings of a durable peace? To this end, let us devote ourselves. If war begins in the minds of men, it is there that the defences of peace must be built. Forty years after Hiroshima, humanity continues to grapple with the dilemma posed to its very survival by the menace of nuclear weapons. The United Nations must respond to these challenges if it is to provide a meaningful and durable foundation of world peace. I strongly believe that it is only the strengthening of the UN and of the principles of multi-lateralism engraved in its institutions that can help nations to live in peace and contribute to the progress of mankind as a whole. The UN and its specialised agencies during 40 years of their activity, have achieved significant results in many fields of international relations. They have rendered their full support to the legitimate struggle in the emancipation of peoples. The United Nations has greatly contributed to the fact that international economic and social problems, inherent in the developmental process of developing countries, have become an integral part of overall efforts in the promotion of peace and security in the world. The United Nations has constantly advocated the promotion of human rights and self-determination of peoples, and the elimination of all forms of racism and apartheid. It has also adopted series of important international legal instruments of which most outstanding is the Law of the Sea.

I see that today's gathering has a wide cross-section of people from different walks of life and many young people from schools and universities. I hope that this commemorative function and the various activities to observe the 40th anniversary during this past week will lead to a clearer perception of the role of United Nations in India. The UN embodies our common hope for a better future for all mankind. I hope that the year 1985 will mark the beginning of a year of durable global peace with the assurance of independence, social and economic development, justice and progress for all nations and peoples. I hope that the successful partnership between the UN and its various specialised agencies and India will continue to develop. As one of our ancient sages said: "Common be your end, common be your purpose, common be your deliberations, common be your desires, unified be your hearts, united be your intentions, perfect be the union among you".



## Friendship and Cooperation

IT IS WITH great pleasure that I accept the Letters of Credence by which the President of the Peoples Republic of Bulgaria has accredited you as Ambassador Extra-ordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of Bulgaria to the Republic of India. I felicitate you on your appointment to this position of high responsibility and extend you a warm welcome to our country.

Relations between India and Bulgaria have traditionally been close and cordial. Our bilateral cooperation in different areas has grown steadily over the years and encompasses a wide range. The well established contacts between our two countries in culture, education, scholarship and related areas have been further enriched in recent years. Relations between our two countries are based on mutual sympathy and regard. We have respect for each other's views in the best spirit of peaceful co-existence. A valued tradition of exchange of high level visits has been established. We have found common ground and similar perspectives on leading international issues.

The people of India have great goodwill for your country. We have followed with attention Bulgaria's achievements in all round national development, in the building of the economy, in science and technology and in culture and the arts, and in the people's welfare. The excellence you have attained in agriculture and many branches of industry is noteworthy. We respect Bulgaria's devotion to peace and international cooperation. I appreciate Your Excellency's sentiments of goodwill and friendship towards India and our foreign policy, including our activities in the Non-Alignment Movement.

I am confident that the close friendship and cooperation between India and Bulgaria will continue to develop in a stable and fruitful manner, in the interest of our two countries and of world peace and harmony.

I greatly appreciate Your Excellency's desire to contribute to the strengthening and development of friendship and cooperation

between our two countries. You may be assured that during your term of office here you will receive all possible cooperation in the discharge of your mission. I wish you a happy and purposeful stay in our country and success in your important assignment.

I would also like to express my gratitude for the good wishes extended by the President of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. I request you to convey my greetings and best wishes to him for his personal health as well as for the continued progress, prosperity and success of the great and friendly people of Bulgaria.

## Common Strands of Heritage

**IT GIVES ME** great pleasure to welcome you to our country as the new Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia.

You have referred to the strong historical and cultural links between our two countries. India and Indonesia, Excellency, are indeed closely linked with common strands of a rich cultural heritage spanning many centuries. Both our peoples are inheritors of a common ethos which believes in humanism and justice. Our nations have also given to each other in recent times, commendable support and strength in their struggle against foreign domination and in the process have drawn inspiration from each other. As the founder-members of Non-Alignment, both India and Indonesia have developed a broad identity of views on major international issues and it is a matter of particular satisfaction that our two countries have cooperated with each other in multi-national forums to eliminate the last vestiges of colonialism, to struggle against racism and to promote the cause of peace and justice.

We have nostalgic memories of the formative days of the Indonesian Republic, events which were followed closely and with deep interest by our own freedom-fighters. The glorious dawn of independence in your country and our own, was followed by the birth of a new sense of national pride and fresh awareness of our identities as Asian countries. The concrete result of these deep stirrings in our national consciousness, was the Bandung Conference of 1955 in which both our countries played a pivotal role. We have seen these firm foundations of friendship blossom in many directions since those happy beginnings. It is a matter of pride that our two countries are committed to the development of societies, which offer full respect and protection to the rich variety of ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities that inhabit our two countries. We are convinced that both of us, each in our own way, have chosen the correct path for our respective development, so that the genius of our peoples may find fullest expression.

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Speech while accepting the credentials from Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, New Delhi, November 11, 1985

We believe that both, in the spheres of economic cooperation, be it in the form of joint ventures, or by way of increased bilateral trade, and in the field of promoting greater cultural contact and interaction in other fields, a great deal more needs to be done. I am sure with our shared commitment to South-South cooperation, further efforts in these directions will be mutually beneficial.

I would like to assure you that you will get the fullest cooperation and assistance from my Government in your Mission. I wish you a very enjoyable and fruitful stay in our midst.

May I request you to convey to H.E. President Soeharto our very best wishes for his health and happiness, and for the continued progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Indonesia.

## Neighbours and Friends

IT IS WITH pleasure that I welcome you today as the Ambassador of Bhutan, a country with which we have the warmest of relations.

Your Excellency, you are not new to us, nor we to you. You were accredited as Ambassador to India just a few years ago and we regard you as a friend. You are indeed doubly welcome.

We enjoy the closest relations with our friendly neighbour Bhutan. Our friendship has even deeper roots than those described by text books of international politics. Our political and economic contacts, shared historical tradition, the facts of geography, the kinship of culture and the common spiritual inheritance give substance and character to our relationship. In brief, we are neighbours, partners and friends.

Your Excellency, I had the privilege of welcoming His Majesty in India in February last year. Our Prime Minister visited Bhutan a few months ago. The meeting of minds and the harmony of opinions and perceptions which resulted from these exchanges reflect all that is essential in Indo-Bhutan relations—mutual understanding on each other's aspirations and interests, frequent and free consultation, and benefitting from shared experience.

Under His Majesty the King's enlightened leadership, Bhutan has developed with impressive strides. We see with admiration how the old has been reconciled with the new and how Bhutan progresses and changes without losing the essential and the valuable from your ancient culture. We salute King Jigme Singye Wangchuck's wisdom in achieving this rare synthesis.

India is privileged to have been a partner in Bhutan's development since many years and our cooperation has many facets. From hydro-electric projects to education, from Buddhist research to telecommunications, we have shared our resources, human and material. Our joint efforts towards socio-economic development shall continue to reflect our political relationship.

The future holds many possibilities for Indo-Bhutan cooperation. Several new projects have been initiated in the past year, and some are presently under discussion. If these will help Bhutan to take another step forward, if they contribute to the good of her people, if they lead to even higher levels of mutual cooperation, they will have served a noble purpose.

The SAARC Summit at Dhaka last December was an unique step towards cooperation in South Asia. The sharing of the resources of our region can only benefit us all and from joint prosperity we will derive inherent strength. The friendship of India and Bhutan constitutes a major contribution to the growth of this new Association. The Summit this year will be hosted by India; next year by Bhutan. We hope these Summits will be able to inspire the whole region with what has come to be called the SAARC spirit.

I reiterate our happiness in having Your Excellency back with us as your country's new Ambassador and I congratulate you on also being elevated to the rank of Cabinet Minister in your country. I am confident that you shall play your part in further enhancing our relationship and I wish you success in these endeavours. I request Your Excellency to convey my warm greetings and best wishes to His Majesty the King.

## Birth Place of Many Religions

**Y**OUR HOLINESS, IT is my privilege to welcome you on your visit to India. Yours is the first State visit to this country by the Head of the Holy See. We recall of course, the visit of His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, when he came to attend the Eucharistic Congress in Bombay over twenty years ago.

Your Holiness, as Bishop of Rome, you have your adherents in every continent of the globe. In this country, over 11 million Indians are Roman Catholics. For them, as much as for the rest of the people of India, your visit will be a memorable event.

India has been the birth place of many religions, and has become the house of many others. Through the ages, religious thought and enquiry have flourished here, and it is this that has encouraged the establishment and growth of religions exogenous to our land. In India, Christianity goes back to 52 AD when St. Thomas, one of the Apostles of Christ, is said to have landed on our West Coast. The advent of Islam into India came very many centuries later. But India has been able to assimilate all these beliefs and fuse them into a total Indianness. Thus, in this country, you will find, Your Holiness, that for hundreds of years now a subconscious dialogue of the most important of the world's religions has been going on among and through the peoples of India. This interaction is the basis and the strength of India's secular polity today, where 750 million people are free to follow their chosen faith and are not subject to pressures, either that of the State or of other religious denominations.

The Holy See is sensitive to the problems that mankind faces today. Very recently Your Holiness had said, "Peace is a value with no frontiers". We in India share this belief. We have called for an immediate halt in the arms race and for total nuclear disarmament.

Like wars, poverty and apartheid are also an affront to human dignity. No age can call itself truly civilised, no matter what its technological or cultural achievements, as long as such economic and

social deprivation continues. This, in our view, is as much the responsibility of the global community as it is of each nation where discrimination and injustice exist.

During the ten days that you would be here, you would be travelling to several parts of this country and meeting with a large cross-section of the Indian people. You would be able to see the pace of development achieved in the short time since our independence.

The Holy See has had diplomatic relations with this country almost from the time of our independence, but your visit here will establish a fresh relationship. From this encounter, and drawing from the strength of our ancient traditions and current convictions, we should be able to bring the world a renewed message of peace and freedom from want, for all of mankind.

May I extend once again, Your Holiness, a warm welcome to you and your delegation.



## Cordial and Friendly

IT IS WITH great pleasure that I take this opportunity to welcome you to India as the Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda.

Relations between India and Rwanda have been cordial and friendly. We are happy to note that our two countries have an identity of views on various major international issues, such as apartheid, and the economic development of the third world. As members of the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement, our two countries have made efforts in international fora to encourage and persuade others to share our points of view.

India's relations with Africa date back several centuries, and India's association with, and support for, the struggle of liberation movements in Africa, is well known. India has supported and will continue to support, the peoples of South Africa and Namibia in their struggle against oppression. It is our hope that we will soon see the day when a just and equitable order is introduced into South Africa, and Namibia joins the comity of nations as a free country.

We are happy to note that despite great difficulties, Rwanda is doing well in the economic field under the able leadership of President Habyarimana Juvenal. Much more remains to be done by both our countries to further develop the economic relations between us. India is always happy and ready to share her experience in the field of socio-economic development with Rwanda. Mr. Ambassador, we hope that during your tenure as your country's distinguished representative, relations between India and Rwanda will be strengthened further for the mutual benefit of both countries.

I am pleased to accept your letter of credentials as Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda to India. Mr. Ambassador, kindly convey to the friendly people and the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and personally to President Habyarimana Juvenal my warm greetings and best wishes. I also wish to extend to you my best wishes for your success as the Ambassador of your country to India.

## Developing New Links

IT IS WITH great pleasure that I take this opportunity to welcome you to India as a distinguished representative of the Republic of Zaire. Both our countries have friendly and close relations, and we are making efforts to further develop our links.

It is a matter of regret that even in the present times when freedom and liberty are taken for granted as the right of all countries and peoples, in certain parts of the world, especially in Namibia and South Africa, so many continue to suffer from oppression, injustice and racial discrimination. India has always extended its full moral, material and diplomatic support to the just struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa and Namibia and is confident that the national liberation movements in Southern Africa will soon triumph in their endeavour to restore a polity based on justice and equality.

We in India have achieved a significant degree of progress and emancipation from grinding poverty, disease and squalor, and the government is continuously attempting to provide the means for a decent life to its citizens. Our progress has been in diverse fields such as education, commerce, industry, science and technology, agriculture and cultural development. Since India attained its independence, we have made determined efforts to strengthen our bonds with other developing countries, and, in spite of our constraints, we have tried to cooperate and strengthen our bilateral relations with nations in Africa, to our mutual benefit. I would like to assure you of our continued cooperation for furthering our bilateral relations so as to strengthen the already existing bonds between our two countries. The scope for cooperation is vast and I am sure that during your tenure here as your country's distinguished representative, the ties between India and Zaire will be further strengthened. The Government of India will be happy to assist you in achieving this objective.

I have great pleasure in accepting your Letter of Credence and request you to convey my best regards to the President of the Republic

of Zaire His Excellency Mr. Mobutu Sose Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga. Excellency, I wish to take this opportunity of wishing you every success in your tenure as the Ambassador of the Republic of Zaire to India.

## Goodwill Oriented Ties

IT IS WITH great pleasure that I accept the Letters of Credence by which the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has accredited you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the Republic of India. I felicitate you on your appointment to this position of high responsibility and extend you a warm welcome to our country.

The relations between India and Yugoslavia have traditionally been warm and cordial. Our friendly ties have been progressively strengthened over the years. We can look back with satisfaction at the steady development of our cooperation in range and depth. The growth of our exchanges in the economic, scientific and technical fields has an important place in the overall relationship. It has added content to our friendship and is based on mutual advantage. Indo-Yugoslav contacts in culture and the arts, in scholarship and education predate the modern era. In recent years, they have expanded considerably, enriching the lives of both of our peoples.

Of particular note is the fact that our relations are based on mutual goodwill, respect and confidence. India has high regard for Yugoslavia's achievements, past and present. The people of India followed with admiration the heroic and victorious struggle waged by Yugoslavia against Nazi aggression during World War II. We are also well acquainted with your great successes in national reconstruction and in setting up a modern federal state, in the building of the economy and in diverse other areas, including the arts and the science. We respect the Yugoslav people's dedicated efforts for peace and international cooperation. I also appreciate the sentiments of goodwill and friendship, you have expressed towards India and our foreign policy.

Our two countries have established a good practice of high level contacts and political dialogue. Through this we have found much common ground in our approach to leading international issues. This is reflected in our close cooperation in the United Nations and in other

multilateral forums. A particularly important manifestation is our common commitment to the ideals of the Non-aligned Movement and our well established partnership in the furtherance of shared objectives. This has been a significant aspect of Indo-Yugoslav relations which has provided a firm foundation for bilateral ties and enriched our relationship. We cherish the legacy of the founding fathers of the Non-aligned Movement. We are living today in a difficult international situation marked by conflict and tension, by an escalating nuclear arms race and a serious global economic crisis. Our friendship and cooperation is therefore more relevant than ever. I have no doubt that both our countries will contribute effectively to addressing these issues in a spirit of cooperation.

Excellency, you have come at a time when we are preparing for the Ministerial meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of Non-aligned countries. This will be followed not long thereafter, by the 8th Conference of Heads of States and Governments of the Non-aligned countries to be held in Harare. India looks forward to close cooperation with Yugoslavia and other non-aligned countries to ensure the success of this meeting so that the movement emerges even stronger and more united.

Our policy of close cooperation with Yugoslavia is of long standing and goes back to the historic meeting between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and President Josip Broz Tito. It was continued and consolidated under the leadership of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The Government of India looks forward to further developing this tradition, and to work with your Government for fulfilling the considerable potential for cooperation in the economic and other fields. I am confident that in the years ahead our relations will grow further in the best interest of our two countries and of international peace and harmony.

I greatly appreciate Your Excellency's desire to contribute to the strengthening and development of friendship and cooperation between our two countries. You may be assured that during your term of office here, you will receive all possible cooperation in the discharge of your mission. I wish you a happy and purposeful stay in our country and success in your important assignment.

I would also like to express my gratitude for the good wishes extended by President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I request you to convey my greetings and best wishes to him for his personal health, as well as for the continued progress, prosperity and success of the great and friendly people of Yugoslavia.

## Building Cordial Relations

I AM HAPPY to welcome you to India and to wish you all success in your assignment.

Allow me to warmly reciprocate the kind sentiments expressed by His Excellency Mr. Heng Samrin, President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, about the people and Government of India. I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to His Excellency Mr. Heng Samrin for his personal health and well-being and for the progress and welfare of the friendly people of Kampuchea.

We in India have a deep and abiding sympathy for your people since ancient times. In recent history the Kampuchean people have been one of the worst sufferers in Asia and the world. Your men and women made enormous sacrifices to liberate themselves from tyranny and regain their freedom and pride. We are happy to note the achievements made by them in rebuilding the country into a strong and peaceful Nation within the short period since the People's Republic of Kampuchea came into being.

India and Kampuchea share many cultural affinities which are rooted in our mutual history. It has always been our cherished desire that the conflicts in Indo-China should end, and peace and tranquillity should return to all the three States in the region, including Kampuchea. This was the chief thought of Indian leaders like Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and we have followed this principled policy till today. India was amongst the first Nations to recognise the People's Republic of Kampuchea. We are happy to stand side by side with you in the pursuit of our common ideals of anti-colonialism, National Independence, Peace and Non-alignment.

Excellency, I take this opportunity to assure you that my Government will provide you all facilities for the success of your mission in further building and expanding our bilateral relations in all fields.

## Reciprocity in Cooperation

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to accept the letters of credence accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Norway to India and also to accept the letter of recall of your predecessor.

India and Norway have a tradition of close and continuous cooperation for several years now. We greatly value Norway's assistance to India in the fields of social welfare and economic development. I am glad to note that both countries are exploring closer cooperation in other areas, including sophisticated technology.

We were happy to receive recently their Royal Highness, the Crown Prince and the Crown Princess. We hope that their meetings and discussions in New Delhi and other cities would facilitate the task of greater interaction between businessmen of both countries.

Excellency, both in India and Norway democracy is firmly rooted and our people believe in the growth and development of our respective countries through democratic means. Like Norway, we greatly value the individual's right to develop himself freely as a useful and participating member of the society. India has gone through some unfortunate experiences in the last two years, but the people of India had the wisdom to reaffirm the values of national unity and integrity for which they have striven all along. It is India's firm belief that the friends of India would not, even unwittingly, facilitate the efforts of a small minority of anti-national elements living abroad to attempt to destabilise the country.

During your stay in India you will have the opportunity to see our efforts to build a modern India within a democratic framework and in keeping with our cultural and spiritual heritage.

You have rightly said that as members of the UNO, our two countries have a mutual interest in strengthening cooperation in order to promote peace, security and well-being in the international society. We ourselves also strive to achieve this objective in our sub-continent.

I take this opportunity to welcome you to India and to wish you a

rewarding stay and to assure you that you will receive full coöperation from my government in the pursuit of your tasks. Please convey my best wishes to His Majesty the King of Norway and to the Government and people of Norway for their well-being and prosperity.



## Bonds of Friendship

**I** HAVE GREAT pleasure in welcoming you to India as the representative of the Republic of Argentina— a great peace loving nation with whom India has a very cordial relationship.

Excellency, the world today is beset with a multitude of problems. Economic disparity between the rich and the poor nations is continuing to widen year after year giving rise to widespread discontent. While at the same time, the expenditure on acquisition of arms by big powers is burgeoning. This is not only in the case of conventional arms but more dangerously true of the dreaded nuclear arsenal. We must ameliorate this situation if mankind is to survive. Tensions in different parts of the world need to be defused urgently and in a just manner to give all peoples the chances for peace and development. The nuclear arms race must be stopped in order to prevent a nuclear holocaust which would threaten the very existence of mankind.

Excellency, I am confident that Argentina and India, being both active and dedicated members of the Non-aligned Movement and also among the Six Nations taking part in the initiative to address directly the big powers to put an end to the arms race, will cooperate mutually in endeavours to promote peace and economic and social justice in the world. The leadership of both gives the highest priority to these objectives.

We have appreciated your Government's sincere efforts to resolve bilateral problems in your regions by peaceful means and supported your endeavour to end vestiges of colonial rule. We note with satisfaction that the vast majority of the membership of the United Nations have done the same.

We in India have also watched with admiration the efforts and successes of the Argentina Government under the leadership of President Alfonsín in restoring democracy and social justice in your country. I myself had the privilege to see this development and meet

your people recently. The warmth of their welcome will always be a cherished memory.

India and Argentina traditionally have had a very cordial relationship. It is our desire that this relationship will grow from strength to strength and that multi-faceted cooperation between our two countries will be further intensified. I assure you that my Government will extend the utmost cooperation to you for the discharge of your duties during your tenure in India.

I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to extend to President Alfonsín, the Government and the people of Argentina, the most cordial and friendly greetings on my own behalf as well as on the behalf of the Government and the people of India.

Finally, Excellency, I convey to you my best wishes for a very pleasant and successful tenure in India both professionally and personally.

## Ideals and Aspirations

IT IS WITH great pleasure that I extend to Your Excellency, and the distinguished members of your delegation, a warm welcome to our country. This is not your first visit; we had the privilege of receiving you six years ago. Once again, we are very happy to have the honour of having you, a good friend of India, in our midst. Many changes have taken place on the international scene since you were here last, and it is our hope that your present visit will provide both sides an opportunity for a fresh exchange of views and ideas on many important issues.

Seychelles and India are neighbours. With the Indian Ocean linking our two countries, we have had a history of friendship born out of social, cultural and commercial contacts. We share a similar colonial past. Though most of the countries in our region are now free from the shackles of colonialism, nevertheless external interference and the resultant increase in tensions, continue to afflict the region and regard its progress. It is unfortunate that the Indian Ocean is sought to be converted into the arena of great power rivalries and militarisation, which pose a grave threat to peace and stability of the region. It is, therefore, natural that we should unite our efforts together calling for an end to the military presence of non-littoral States. India sincerely appreciates the firm and principled stand taken by Seychelles in this regard. As members of the Non-aligned Movement, it shall be our common endeavour to turn the Indian Ocean into a 'Zone of Peace'. India supports the view that a conference on the Indian Ocean should be convened at the earliest possible opportunity to implement the UN Declaration of 1971, and that the presence of the *Super Powers* at such a conference is essential.

Nuclear disarmament is a crucial issue of our times. Unless effective steps are taken to curb the testing, production, stockpiling and deployment of nuclear arms, the very existence of humanity will be threatened. The appeal of the Six-Nation Summit last year has received the support of an overwhelming majority of UN members,

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Speech at Banquet in honour of the President of Seychelles, New Delhi, April 22, 1986

and of public opinion throughout the world. The recently concluded Geneva Summit resulted in a commitment on the part of the two super powers to further negotiate rather than adopt a path of confrontation. We hope that this process would continue to be carried forward leading to a significant reduction in strategic nuclear arms and a moratorium on nuclear weapons tests, as a first step towards a total ban on testing.

Unfortunately, there are still some vestiges of colonialism and racism which remain in the African Continent. India views with deep concern the situation in South Africa brought about by the obnoxious policy of apartheid adopted by the racist regime. The struggle for freedom and human rights is intensifying. We have repeatedly expressed our conviction that peaceful change in South Africa can only come about with the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against the racist regime by the entire world community. As Your Excellency is aware, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Nassau had drawn up a package of concrete and binding measures against apartheid with their implementation set within a time-frame. One of these was the setting up of a Group of Eminent Persons, who were to submit a report by the end of June 1986, on whether the South African Regime had started dismantling the apparatus of apartheid. We understand that this Group has visited South Africa and the Frontline States and has made suggestions to the South African Government, and we await further developments.

The question of Namibian independence remains a matter of deep concern to all of us. South Africa has so far managed to thwart the implementation of UN Resolution 435 on Namibia. The responsibility of the UN for the independence of Namibia must once again be strongly affirmed. We strongly oppose any effort to bypass the UN by the promotion of spurious schemes of internal settlements, as also to create extraneous linkages such as the withdrawal of foreign forces from Angola. India fully supports SWAPO, the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia, in their struggle for freedom and independence.

Your Excellency, the close and friendly ties between our two countries stem not only from the fact of our geographical proximity, but also from common ideals and aspirations. We are both fully committed to the objectives of the Non-aligned Movement and of creating a New International Economic Order. Seychelles and India,

as developing countries, are striving to raise the standard of living of their people. Unfortunately, disparities between the developed and developing countries persist and are even growing. The developed countries have turned a Nelson's eye towards urgently needed reforms in the world economic system. The North-South dialogue has failed to yield meaningful results. The only way to arrest the deteriorating situation of disequilibrium in the global economy and persisting inequality in international economic relations, is to establish a New International Economic order by promoting inter-dependence among the developing countries themselves, in the fields of economic and technical cooperation. We are confident that the visit of Your Excellency to our country will provide a timely opportunity to identify fresh areas of mutually beneficial bilateral economic cooperation.

Distinguished Guests, may I now request you to join me in raising a toast to the health and happiness of His Excellency President F.A. Rene, to the prosperity and well-being of the friendly people of the Seychelles, and to the further consolidation of the close and friendly relations between our two countries.

## Time Tested Ties

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome you to India as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Kuwait. I thank you for conveying to us the warm greetings of H.H. Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait. I also wish to thank you for the warm and friendly sentiments expressed by you about our country.

Relations between India and Kuwait date back to centuries. The two countries are bound by ancient and historic ties. There has been continuous contact between the people of the two countries in various fields which has been mutually rewarding. In recent years, trade relations and economic cooperation between India and Kuwait have grown in volume and range. A large number of Indian workers are working in Kuwait thereby participating in Kuwait's development programme.

The fundamental and basic ideals shared by India and the State of Kuwait are peace and non-alignment and opposition to domination in any form—political or economic.. This has led to our clear commitment to the policy of self-reliance and economic upliftment with social justice for our peoples. The friendly relations between India and the State of Kuwait are fully reflected in our shared objectives to work for peace and development.

Today the greatest threat to peace in the international sphere comes from the escalation of arms race, especially the nuclear arms race, great power rivalries, apartheid and racism and the growing gap between rich and poor nations. India has always called for reducing international tension and for settlement of differences through negotiations. In this connection, the support India has constantly given to the Arab cause and particularly to the Palestine problem is noteworthy. The Iran-Iraq war has caused pain and anguish to India. We have spared no effort to negotiate an early settlement of this unfortunate war between two fellow members of the Non-aligned Movement.

Excellency, over the years, our bilateral relations in the economic, commercial and cultural spheres have been diversified. These relations are a welcome example of cooperation between developing countries. We look forward to further strengthening of these ties. I am sure that with your Excellency's personal efforts major steps can be taken during your tenure in India to achieve these objectives.

I can assure your Excellency that you will receive fullest cooperation of my government in your efforts to further consolidate the excellent relations already existing between our two countries.

I wish you a happy and fruitful sojourn in our country.

## Friendly and Cordial Neighbour

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome you, Mr. President, in our midst today. You are of course no stranger to this country. Not only have we had the pleasure of welcoming you to this country on more than one occasion, we also recall the time you spent in this country in one of our important institutions. But on this visit we feel doubly privileged as you come in a dual capacity—as the leader of a friendly, brotherly, neighbour and as the first Chairman of the SAARC—the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

There are perhaps few countries in the world who have so much in common as India and Bangladesh. Not only have we shed our blood together in the cause of liberation and national independence, but we are bound together by common strands of history and culture. Whether it is the Bengali language or the heritage of Rabindra Nath Tagore, whether it is the inspiring message of Nazrul Islam or the folk songs of Fakir Lalan Shah, the bonds that tie us together are strong and enduring.

Since her liberation, Bangladesh has played an important role in our region and in the world. We are all indebted to Bangladesh for the inspiration that led to the formation of SAARC. We are faced with an unjust international economic order and our future lies in cooperation with each other on the basis of complementarities in our economies. By cooperating with each other we can help each other to develop and reduce our dependence on the developed world. This process has already started with the formation of SAARC, with its goal of building collective self-reliance. In a hostile international environment, it is in these efforts at fostering regional cooperation that our hope for the future lies.

In political terms the international environment is equally depressing. The escalation of the nuclear arms race continues unabated and a new dimension has been added by the hectic efforts to develop and deploy outer space weapons. The global military



expenditure is soon expected to reach a trillion dollars a year. In a world faced with starvation and deprivation, the largest share of the world's resources continue to be devoted to developing new weapons of mass destruction.

The security situation in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region is unfavourable for all of us. Despite our earnest desire to have the military presence of outside power removed from the area, they continue to increase their presence in the region. We cannot but feel apprehensive at these developments. To our dismay, the conference on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace has been postponed again, now to be held some time before 1983.

Excellency, the relations between our two countries are close, friendly and cordial. Of course there are some differences in perception as there are between any two brothers, but these are more on matters of detail. There is a basic realisation that history and geography necessitate cooperative and friendly relations between our two countries. May I take this opportunity to assure you, Excellency, of the earnest desire of my government to work for further improvement of our relations with your country and to seek to resolve all remaining problems in this spirit. We have no doubt that your government on your part has the same approach.

Both our countries must redouble our efforts to further expand and diversify our relations. Expanding bilateral cooperation, as also regional cooperation under SAARC, will be of great mutual benefit and will contribute to the efforts of both our countries to build a better life for our peoples. I am confident that your present visit will make an important contribution in the direction.

May I now invite all of you to join me in a toast to the health and happiness of His Excellency Lt. Gen. Hussain Muhammed Earshad President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and Begum Earshad and to the continued progress and prosperity of the people of Bangladesh and to friendship between our two countries.

## New Economic Order

I HAVE GREAT pleasure in welcoming you to India as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Peru—a great and peace-loving nation with whom India has traditionally cordial relations.

Excellency, as you have mentioned, the world today has not only drifted from the fulfilment of the goal of a New International Economic Order so eagerly sought by millions of people but in fact is witnessing growing economic disparity between the developed and developing nations. At the same time the already colossal expenditure on acquisition of arms by the big powers is escalating. This is not only so in the case of conventional arms but more dangerously true of the growth in the universally dreaded nuclear arsenal. This situation must be ended if mankind is to survive. Tensions in different parts of the world need to be defused urgently and international problems solved in a just and peaceful manner to give all peoples the chance to live in peace and happiness. The insanity of the arms race could lead to a universal holocaust and even threaten the very existence of mankind.

Excellency, we have great admiration for the active role being played in international affairs and in the Non-aligned Movement by Peru under the leadership of your esteemed and dynamic Presidentship. We appreciate your Government's sustained efforts as an active member of the Contadora Support Group towards resolving by peaceful means the serious problems existing in the Central American region. We have ourselves also extended support to the Contadora effort and wish it all success.

Our two countries, despite the vast geographical distance that separate them, have much more in common than the historic experience of colonial rule. Excellency, our peoples are engaged in evolving a democratic way of life and seek to ensure economic and social justice and progress for themselves. It is our earnest desire that our bilateral relationship should grow in strength and content. We are confident that both India and Peru can establish a strong basis for

mutually beneficial cooperation in the spirit of South-South cooperation. We also look forward to closer bilateral cultural exchanges.

May I assure your Excellency of my Government's utmost cooperation to you in the discharge of your duties during your tenure in India. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to extend to His Excellency President Alan Garcia, and to the Government and the friendly people of Peru the most cordial greetings on behalf of the Government and people of India as well as on my own behalf.

Finally, Excellency, I convey to you my best wishes for a successful and pleasant tenure in India.

## Enduring Bonds of Friendship

IT IS GREAT pleasure for me to be here today in your beautiful land. A few months ago, we had the pleasure of welcoming you in India and I am delighted at this opportunity to renew our contacts. I am also deeply appreciative of the warmth and the cordiality of the reception and hospitality extended to us by Your Majesties and the friendly people of Nepal. My presence in your midst today is further testimony, if such were required, of the enduring bonds of friendship, cooperation and goodwill that bind our two countries together.

India is committed to the maintenance of friendly relations with all countries based on the principles of *Panchashila* and on the recognition of the need for inter-dependence and cooperation for mutual benefit. However, in the case of our relations with the Kingdom of Nepal, even these well-recognised aspects of our foreign policy are transcended by other factors that have tied us together for centuries. The age-old relationship based on geography, history, culture, religion, customs and so many commonly shared experiences of our peoples constitute only a small fraction of the total relationship.

Located in the very heart of the sub-continent and in the shadow of the magnificent Himalayas, to me Nepal is the crucible of the great social, cultural and religious traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism. We in India regard Nepal with a certain reverence and affection as the holy land of Lord Pashupatinath, from which our great sages have drawn spiritual inspiration since time immemorial. I consider my visit also as a pilgrimage.

More than with any other neighbour, our people have enjoyed deep, abiding and unhindered contact with the kindred people of Nepal. This relationship is symbolised by our own open border, which is a border of peace and friendly interchange. It is these permanent underlying bonds that provide a firm foundation for a stable relationship between us, allowing mutual understanding to be safeguarded and overcoming any temporary problems or issues that might arise between us.

Relations between India and Nepal have continued to grow in modern times, adding new dimensions to the solid bedrock of timetested ties. The leaders of our independence movement took pride in the fact that Nepal had successfully remained outside the tentacles of imperialism and colonial rule. Our relations with Nepal were being strengthened even as we fought for the freedom of India. As we gained independence, and Nepal launched itself into modern times, our common bonds grew with the realisation that both our countries were faced with the awesome problems of economic development. It has thus become the endeavour of both our Governments to raise the standard of living of our peoples, to meet their basic wants and to bring them happiness and prosperity. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that we have shared a similar outlook on economic development in our countries while joining hands in striving for peace in the international arena.

Since the days of our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, we have consistently conducted our relations with Nepal on the basis of sovereign equality and mutual benefit. However, given the uniqueness of the bonds which tie us together, we have also remained conscious of the intimate relationship which so happily exists between our two countries. Like our shared frontiers, the policies and actions of our two Governments continually impact on each other. As Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said nearly three decades ago: "The relations between us, based on love and bonds of culture, are deep rooted and when the roots go so deep, any happy event in our country has its effect on you, and similarly if you progress, we feel elated."

India has been happy to contribute in every possible way to the development of Nepal and, over the years, has cooperated with Nepal in a wide variety of fields ranging from roads, power, irrigation and communications to health and education. It has been our endeavour to strengthen Nepal's economic infrastructure and to facilitate its progress on the road towards self-reliance. In the recent past, the new Bir Hospital complex has been constructed under the Indian aid programme. Other major projects are in hand. We take pride in the contribution which we have been able to make in bringing about progress and prosperity to your country. We look forward to its continuance.

Your Majesties, our two countries share a fundamental interdependence in virtually all areas that touch upon the well-being of our peoples, economic, political, social, religious and ecological.

Progress and stability in Nepal under your wise leadership helps us, just as our own progress and strength can only be to the advantage of Nepal. The possibilities of joint collaboration in harnessing our natural resources are vast and require organised efforts on both sides before benefits can be passed on to our peoples. We share common rivers which can, to mutual benefit, be utilised for irrigation and electrification and speed up the pace of the progress in our economies. I am confident that in the coming months, the momentum of progress on cooperation over the utilisation of water resources and in other areas will accelerate and further strengthen our economic links.

Tensions and conflicts continue to mark the international environment of today, and despite urgent appeals from the international community for peace, disarmament, and an end to the barbaric apartheid regime in South Africa, little progress is made on these critical issues that will determine mankind's future. As Chairman of NAM, India has raised its voice consistently for peace and co-existence, and for reducing the inequalities between the developed and the developing. The Non-aligned Movement provides a voice to the weak and the poor, and India's commitment to its principles underlines our respect for the sovereign and equal status of all nations, irrespective of their size and strength.

India is determined to expand its friendship with all neighbours. Like Your Majesty we are convinced that an atmosphere of peace and stability in our region is necessary for its economic development and prosperity. Regional cooperation among the nations of South Asia has taken root and become a well established concept which has been welcomed by all the countries of the region. It is only by strengthening the framework of cooperation among the SAARC nations that we shall be able to speed up the process of economic development and provide a brighter future for our peoples, while at the same time building mutual understanding and confidence among regional States without which outside powers will always continue to exploit our differences.

Under Your Majesty's enlightened leadership, your country has recently gone through its Second General Elections held on the basis of adult franchise. The people of Nepal have enthusiastically gone through the process of selecting their representatives to the Rashtriya Panchayat. We in India have witnessed these developments with interest. The Government and the people of India would like to wish the new Prime Minister, Mr. Marich Man Singh, and his Cabinet

colleagues all success in their efforts to tackle the difficult tasks of all round economic development. It is our belief that the new Government, under Your Majesty's guidance, will also further strengthen the already firm ties of friendship and cooperation between Nepal and India.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now request you all to join me in a toast to the health and happiness of His majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev and Her majesty Queen Aishwarya, to abiding and ever increasing friendship and prosperity of the fraternal people of Nepal.

## Helping a Neighbour

**O**N MY FIRST visit to your beautiful country I am overwhelmed by the spontaneity of your welcome; and I am honoured by this opportunity to address the people of Kathmandu today. I bring with me the warm wishes of my Government and the Indian people for the citizens of Nepal.

Kathmandu has for centuries been a place of pilgrimages for Indians. The sacred Pashupatinath Temple attracts thousands of people from India who seek solace in worship of the sacred deity. Our shared links of religion are a mere fragment of the depth and closeness of our relationship. There is so much that binds us and keeps us together. While cultural, linguistic and geographical ties have brought our peoples together, we now continue to build on this strong base the edifice of our continued cooperation. India is committed to cooperation with Nepal for its development. We are proud of our contribution in making Nepal accessible to the world. The Tribhuvan Rajpath and the Tribhuvan Airport were among the earliest projects undertaken in Nepal with Indian assistance. Since then many other projects have been started and completed. Very recently the Bir Hospital Out Patient Block was completed and inaugurated by His Majesty. We remain committed to assisting Nepal in providing her people with better medical facilities. In the last year the Central Sector of the Mahendra Raj Marg was completed linking Butwal to Nepalganj. Work has started on the construction of the Library and Museum-cum-Documentation Centre at the Forestry Institute in Hetauda. A major scheme for rural electrification is in progress in Nuwakot district. We are two independent nations, but with cooperation we can jointly devote our energies to eradicate poverty and hunger and improve the living standards of our peoples.

India is committed to friendship with all peoples of the world, especially her neighbours. With Nepal the task is an easy one. We have binding religious and cultural links. There is an abundant feeling of



goodwill and friendship between our countries. We must not remain content with the legacy of history, but must add continually to the substance of our relationship.

I once again thank you, Mr. President, and the citizens of Kathmandu for organising this reception.

## Peace and Cooperation

I BRING TO the Government and people of Nepal greetings and good wishes from the Government and people of India. I shall carry back with me very happy memories of the warm and friendly reception I have received here.

Our neighbour Nepal is so close to us that formal utterances seem out of place. Since time immemorial our people have had great regard and affection for each other because of age-old ties of culture, religion, race, philosophical traditions and geographical proximity. To Indians Nepal is the land of Lord Pashupati Nath to which they come in pilgrimage. With no other country of the world does India share such depth of association and friendship. This historical experience is now a part of our modern day reality, the base on which our dynamic relationship can grow. The legacy of history has been further strengthened by our common endeavour to improve the living conditions of our people through mutual cooperation and trust. Through economic cooperation we have together gained valuable experiences and further cemented the bonds of our friendship.

Our commitment is for peace and cooperation with all peoples of the world. Closer to home our common endeavours culminated in the historical SAARC Summit in Dhaka in December 1986. In South Asia we have now graduated from having a programme of cooperation to forming an Association for cooperation. SAARC shows us the way to work together with determination and find solutions for common problems in a spirit of friendship, trust and mutual understanding.

Though India and Nepal are two independent nations, we have been a part of each other's historical consciousness. In modern times our common cultural consciousness has been broadened to encompass a consciousness of each other's economic realities. India is proud to be associated in the development of a friendly neighbour. During the last year the Central Sector of the Mahendra Raj Marg has

been completed. We have together started work on the Western Sector and with its completion Nepal would have a reliable artery of communication from Mechi in the East to Mahakali in the West. The Out Patient Department of the Bir Hospital was completed in November 1985 and equipped with highly sophisticated nuclear medical equipment. We have been continually associated with the expansion of medical facilities in Nepal. In the three odd decades since our independence we have continually shared the benefit of our experiences for assisting in the rapid development of Nepal. The future well-being of the peoples of India and Nepal lies in strengthening the bonds of an already multifaceted cooperation with each other and in moving ahead together.

Some time ago, my Government expressed its shock and concern on reports of acts of terrorism that have occurred in Nepal. India has always opposed terrorism in all forms, which is to us doubly heinous when it occurs on the soil of a country with which we have enjoyed the closest and most friendly relations. I would like to assure the people of Nepal that India will never permit itself, to be used for any undesirable activities aimed at Nepal.

Under the dynamic leadership of His Majesty, Nepal has recently gone through General Election. We in India have followed these events with interest, and wish Your Excellency, your Cabinet colleagues and the friendly people of Nepal all success in tackling the difficult tasks of all-round economic development. The best wishes of the Government and people of India are with you, and we shall never lag behind in lending our helping hand and providing whatever assistance is possible for your efforts.

## Bridges of Friendship

I THANK YOU, Mr. President, for your warm welcome and for organising this function in my honour. I am very happy to meet members of the Sangh today and to acquaint myself with their activities.

As you know, Indo-Nepal relations are close and cordial. In the words of late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru :

“Our relations with Nepal have been something rather special, not of my making or anybody’s making, but because of history, tradition, geography, cultural contacts and the like, and, therefore, inevitably it had to be that India and Nepal should be intensely interested in each other’s present and future and should grow ever closer”.

Today our countries provide a unique example of cordial relations between sovereign and independent nations. Associations like the Nepal Bharat Maitri Sangh are founded to give continuing relevance to such age-old ties. The growth of the activities of the Sangh since its inception in 1956 is testimony to the fact that our relations are, and remain, warm and friendly, deep and abiding. The people to people exchanges which you build serve to bring our Governments closer together, for it is interaction between peoples which lends meaning and substance to relations between countries.

Our geographical proximity and cultural unity since the days of Ram and Sita and the Buddha, have found concrete shape in the economic cooperation endeavours of the last three decades. India remains committed to assisting His Majesty’s Government in Nepal’s development and in improving the living standards of the people. We are both developing countries and our experiences are similar. The experience of one country can be a solution for the problems of the other.

Cooperation is the need of our times. Our two Governments along with neighbours in South Asia recently came together to form the

SAARC. Our resources are limited; a cooperative effort can help optimise utilisation and to maximise benefit to our peoples. Our Governments are committed to this, but the people must assist in it. The Nepal Bharat Maitri Sangh can play an important role in strengthening and cementing our traditional bonds of friendship.

Mr. President, I would like to congratulate your organisation for its dedicated commitment to the cause of Indo-Nepal friendship. I am sure it will continue to help build more and more bridges of understanding and friendship between the peoples and Governments of India and Nepal.

Long live Indo-Nepal friendship.

## Partnership in Blood and Sweat

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome you to our country as the new High Commissioner of Fiji. Your appointment, Excellency, as the first High Commissioner of Fiji to our country is a significant step in our bilateral relations. It fulfills a long-felt need and seeks to strengthen already existing excellent bonds.

India and Fiji are alike in many respects. Multi-racial richness of our societies, proximity of our cultures, flowering of democracy draw us together in an abiding friendship. The early Indians went to Fiji late last century not as marauding adventurers, but as toiling indentured labour. They worked together with the indigenous Fijians towards a common goal—the country's affluence and betterment. I am happy to note that a partnership that was born in blood and sweat a hundred years ago thrives and gets stronger today.

I am aware that in annual bilateral talks, India and Fiji have identified specific areas of cooperation. The eminent relevance of India's technology and expertise to Fiji's present stage of economic development has been appreciated by us both. In your efforts to identify and consolidate areas of mutual cooperation, you have our assurance of unstinted and whole-hearted support. May your mission, Excellency, be crowned with success.

## Promote Fair Trade

IT GIVES ME pleasure to be here today and to inaugurate the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Textile Merchant's Association. I feel grateful for the good words mentioned about me in the Presidential address. I always feel happy to come to this city which is the birth-place of modern India. It gave birth to great figures in our recent history like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Gurudev Rabinranath Tagore, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and a host of others who contributed to the birth of modern India and its institutions. It was here that beginnings of modern industry and commerce were made and from here they travelled to other parts of the country. It is quite natural for the Textile Merchants Association to grow in this city, a modest way twenty five years ago into a well established organisation now.

I am told that the Textile Merchants Association covers the trading activities relating to the distribution of Textiles in the eastern States of our country. This is a very wide field in the area of distribution. I am of the opinion that the function of distribution is as important as other basic functions like production and consumption in any economy, whether undertaken by private individuals or by agencies of State. In a way distribution is more important because without a well-knit distribution network the economy cannot move forward smoothly as it provides a link between the producer and the consumer.

This region was famous in the world for its handlooms not very long ago in our history. It is known to every one that the region used to export fine cloth to European markets known as *dhaka muslin* which perished from the onslaughts of textile imports from abroad. I feel happy to note that there are a good number of handloom weavers in this region producing a variety of consumer items. Your association, I am sure, will endeavour to give a fillip to the skilled handloom weavers of the region by providing more outlets of marketing for products.

Preservation of artistic skills of million of artisans in our vast-land is a challenge that should be taken up by Association like yours. These skills are the gifts of God for the benefit of humanity and it is the bounden duty of every citizen in our country to take pride in them, preserve and encourage them in all possible ways. The machine and the pleasures it provides pose a great threat to the skill of artisans. It is the responsibility of all of us to encourage them as they are custodians of our ancient heritage.

It is of great importance to see that traders adhere to fair trading practices during the process of distribution of items among consumers which is very essential for smooth flow of business and trade. Strict adherence to a code of conduct by business classes guarantee success to them and help in promoting welfare of consumers. The very fact that you are celebrating Silver Jubilee shows that you have given importance to an ethical code for businessmen in your philosophy of work.

In modern and democratic societies there is a social responsibility on the shoulders of businessmen and merchants to work for the welfare of society. This kind of voluntary effort will go a long way in supplementing the endeavours of the Government. In this context it gives me happiness to know that the Textile Merchants Association are always in the forefront of social welfare activities and ready to render service to people. I am sure that you will continue to serve people in years to come.

I convey my best wishes for the success of your endeavours in future.



## Maintenance of Peace

**T**ODAY WE MARK the annual observance of the International Day of Peace. The occasion holds special significance this year, as it is being celebrated in the International Year of Peace.

In designating 1986 as the International Year of Peace (IYP), the Member States of the United Nations have called the attention of peoples around the world to the need to concentrate on the prospects and problems of attaining this universal goal. The International Year of Peace lays an international foundation for thought and action at every level in the promotion and maintenance of peace. This year is not a simple celebration, but an opportunity for dedicated and continuing action.

On this occasion I would like to congratulate Indian Federation of United Nations Associations, for arranging this function to mark the International Day of Peace and thereby focus attention and encourage reflection on the basic requirements of peace in the contemporary world.

The International Day of Peace should not end with the passing of today; every day should be a day of peace and every year should be a year of peace.

We have gathered together in the International Day of Peace determined to foster its noble objectives, conscious of the unprecedented crisis and threats to peace that the world faces. We have come together for peace. We have shared experiences in efforts towards peace and taken new initiatives for common action.

With just a decade and a half for this century to come to a close, we are convinced of the duty and obligation of all peoples to make concerted efforts to usher in a world of peace as the new century opens. We are convinced that it can be done, that the present dangerous trends in world affairs can be stopped and reversed. We see signs of hope in the new spirit of dialogue and openness among leaders of nations and in the determination of the people to attain peace.

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Speech on the occasion of International Day of Peace organised by Indian Federation of U.N. Associations & Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, September 16, 1986

The threats to peace do not need to be recounted. The race towards nuclear catastrophe is keeping up its momentum. As if the earth and the oceans can no longer bear the weight of weapons, outer space is explored for stationing of arms. Hundreds are killed every day by non-nuclear weapons. Hunger takes its daily toll of thousands. Millions are deprived of basic human needs and fundamental human rights. Millions still groan under domination and exploitation. Apartheid continues denying justice, destroying people and destabilizing nations.

What we have to work together for is a world of peace, not where war is merely absent, not where human survival is just possible, but where justice prevails and human dignity is upheld.

Peace is inextricably inter-linked with development and social progress and its foundation is justice. Deprivation and disparity are threats to peace. Therefore, what is called for is a strategic development initiative for a new international economic order that ensures just economic relations between and within Nations. Further there should be a genuine respect of the rights of people to decide their own destiny, their right to self-determination and inter-dependent development, non-interference in their internal affairs, in conditions of security and social progress.

It is recognised that peace is an essential requirement of the satisfaction of basic human needs such as food, shelter, health, education, labour and environment. We need joint actions to promote substantial reduction of military expenditures with a view to rectifying the current distortions in the use of resources. Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who starve and are not fed, those who shiver and are not clothed.

Nations must seek peace together. We can only create a common future if we can cope with the common crisis we face and build peace on the basis of the concept of common security. A greater commitment to international cooperation is needed for which the universal instrument is the United Nations and its peoples organisations like the Indian Federation of U.N. Associations which are tirelessly striving for universal peace and brotherhood. The power of public opinion is supreme. I am confident that more and more organisations like IFUNA will come forward and the determination of the people to achieve peace will prevail.

We have optimism and hope because we are together for peace. It is in that spirit that we renew our commitment to peace and invite you all, all people of the world, to join in the challenging tasks ahead.

## A Step Ahead for Peace

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome Your Majesties and your distinguished entourage to India. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and India are bound by ties of long standing. India's contact with the Arab world goes far back into history. Arab culture and language has interacted with and contributed richly to the development of India's composite culture. From ancient times India has had regular contacts with the Arab world resulting in an interchange of ideas and concepts. We recall with pride and satisfaction the invaluable contribution of the Arab world and India to the development and achievements of world civilization in the diverse fields of science and technology, pure mathematics, religion and philosophy, literature and medicine. Despite historical upheavals this age-old relationship happily continues to this day.

Your Majesty, Jordan and India have both embarked on ambitious and accelerated programmes of economic development. We note with great admiration Your Majesty's effort to bring the fruits of development to your people and your striving to create in Jordan an area of scientific and technological excellence in West Asia. In India since our Independence in 1947, we have made concerted efforts to move forward in the fields of industry, agriculture and science and technology. I am sure that during your visits to different parts of our country, you will gain a first-hand impression of our programmes of economic development. We are convinced that a process of sharing our experiences in the spirit of South-South cooperation can and should be carried forward to our mutual benefit. We have already embarked on a number of cooperative endeavours and the area of such collaboration can usefully be further expanded.

Your Majesty, West Asia continues to be an area of conflict and tension. We firmly believe that for progress and development to take place peace must prevail. The continuation of hostilities between Iraq and Iran and the consequent loss of human and material resources is a

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Speech at the Banquet in honour of King Hussein and Queen Noor of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, New Delhi, October 6, 1986

matter of deep concern and regret. We have been doing our utmost within the Non-aligned Movement and bilaterally to bring about an immediate end to the fighting. We are deeply aware that Your Majesty has made concerted efforts towards the same end.

The denial of an independent State to the Palestinian people in their own homeland is another pressure point in West Asia threatening world peace. Israel must withdraw from all Arab lands of which it is in illegal occupation. We have consistently and uncompromisingly supported the just Arab cause. We reaffirm our support for the struggle of the Palestinian people led by the PLO as their sole legitimate representative. Your Majesty, Jordan has a vital role to play in the search for a West Asian settlement and we are aware of Your Majesty's efforts to support and sustain the Palestinian cause.

Peace in the West Asian region is also threatened by the continuing tragic conflict in Lebanon. It is essential that through a mutually acceptable negotiated solution peace and order be restored there.

The arrogant and inhuman system of apartheid continues in South Africa. The racist regime has refused to listen to the call of reason and ignores the march of history. This struggle for freedom and human rights in South Africa is intensifying. We fully support the gallant people of South Africa in their struggle to dismantle the abhorrent apparatus of apartheid. The only means available to bring pressure on the white minority regime in South Africa is through the application of mandatory economic sanctions. The will of the international community in this regard must be respected by all states. It is our solemn duty to come to the support of the Front Line states which are being subjected to increasing economic and military pressures by the South African regime. The question of Namibia's independence remains a matter of deep concern to us. The South African regime with external support it enjoys has been systematically preventing the implementation of Security Council Resolution 435 on Namibia. India fully supports SWAPO, the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia, in its struggle for freedom and independence.

Disarmament and nuclear disarmament in particular is no longer merely a question of war and peace but one with a direct bearing on the very survival of the human race. The Six Nation initiative reflects the deep concern of non-nuclear states about the stark dimensions of the nuclear peril. This initiative has underscored the vital and urgent importance of concluding comprehensive ban on nuclear weapon tests and of preventing an arms race in outer space. The Special Harare

Appeal on Disarmament underlines the urgency attached to this issue by the great majority of the peoples of the world. It is imperative that the nuclear weapon powers should heed our appeal and proceed expeditiously to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race and achieve the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Your Majesty, Jordan and India are both active members of the Non-aligned Movement the greatest peace movement in human history. The recently concluded Summit Meeting in Harare demonstrated only too vividly the relevance of our movement as a force for international peace. The cohesion of the movement was further strengthened at Harare and the Harare Summit declaration undoubtedly constitutes a pragmatic blueprint for action calculated to promote disarmament peace and development. We look forward to continuing cooperation with Jordan within the Non-aligned Movement and bilaterally.

Your Majesties, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now request you to join me in raising a toast to the health and happiness of His Majesty King Hussein, Her Majesty Queen Noor, to the prosperity and well-being of the friendly people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and to the further consolidation of the close and friendly relations between the peoples of our two countries.

## Understanding and Cooperation

I AM PLEASED to accept your Letter of Credence accrediting you as the High Commissioner of Canada to India. I welcome you as a distinguished representative of a fellow Commonwealth country with which we share common values and old ties of constructive cooperation.

Our wide contacts and friendship have made it possible for our countries to cooperate on a broad range of bilateral and international issues. This has also helped our leaders to maintain a dialogue on matters of global concern like peace, disarmament and development. These questions are inter-connected and have a bearing on all of us. We think both our countries can make a contribution in addressing them.

India cherishes its membership of the Commonwealth. We find in it a diversity and richness that reflects the variety we find in our own societies. Recently the Commonwealth forum brought our two Prime Ministers together, and they were able to cooperate closely on questions like the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa. We look forward to the next meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government which will be held in Canada. We value such high level contacts and believe, they provide an opportunity for deepening understanding and strengthening cooperation.

India-Canada economic cooperation dates back to the early days of Indian independence and Canadian involvement in international development. We appreciate the assistance we have received from Canada in variety of economic sectors, since 1951. We are glad that this cooperation is continuing. We must continue the dialogue and explore in greater detail the possibility of enlarging our economic cooperation. Along with industrial cooperation, we have to look at the prospects of trade and new areas of collaboration like high technology. We must take advantage of new possibilities.

The test of durable relationship comes when there is an assault on our common values and norms. Both our peoples have suffered from terrorist violence. The tragedy of the Kanishka crash last year touched many families in both countries. We are cooperating in dealing with the international dimensions of terrorist violence directed against India. I am sure our two Governments will work closely in fighting this menace. At the same time, we note with appreciation the opportunities and hospitality that many people of Indian origin have found in Canada. There are a peaceful and hard-working people making a valuable contribution to Canadian society. We look upon them as an important asset in our common endeavour to expand cooperation and deepen friendship.

Excellency, I wish you a successful tenure in India. In your efforts to promote understanding and strengthen bilateral ties, I am sure you will find a positive response from the Government and people of India.

## Love and Fraternity

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today and to associate myself with the Fourteenth World Congress of the International Union of the Catholic Press. I extend a warm welcome to all the delegates assembled here from various parts of India and the world.

I am particularly happy to welcome you to this capital city of India as I am told that although the International Union of the Catholic Press is nearly sixty years old, this is the first that such a Congress is being held in Asia.

Among all the problems the world is facing today, the most important is that of human survival. On the one hand man has broken the hardest barriers of nature and pierced the veils of mystery to attain unparalleled successes in science and industry. He has been trying to conquer the vastness of space and the depths of oceans. His endeavours have been directed at achieving all possible means to maximise material comforts and happiness. On the other hand man has woven a web around himself which might snuff the life out of him, which he means to preserve. He has created diabolical weapons of destruction, which, if used, could annihilate the globe many times over. Super powers which control these weapons of war owe a special responsibility to the world, and I am sure the International Union of the Catholic Press can mobilise public opinion and help create a climate of sanity and peace.

By virtue of unparalleled progress in the means of communication, the world has become so small. We can witness the momentous events in any part of the globe in our homesteads. Distances have become meaningless, as satellites in space bring instant information of confabulations, episodes of harmony and disasters alike. Apart from electronic media, telephone and telegraph, the Press plays a gigantic role in communicating information and views on events and issues of great concern. But it is a paradox, that in most part, it is a one-way communication. The affluent, developed and powerful nations are



able to purview selective information aimed at humanity. Little interest is evinced by the developed nations to project the aspirations and endeavours of the developing societies for improving their lot. There also seems to be a tendency to ignore the non-partisan and non-aligned attitudes of the developing peoples towards the super power rivalries or power blocs. It is here that the bodies like the International Union of the Catholic Press can find ways and means to correct such imbalances and create proper perspectives.

The outcome of the recent discussions on nuclear disarmament between the leaders of the two super powers has not been encouraging. It was an appropriate moment in history to save mankind from the prospect of total extinction. Nevertheless, I hope, the thread of discussions will be picked up soon and the race towards the precipice will be halted. This requires statesmanship of the highest order, which, I am sure, will be forthcoming in the interest of the present and the future generations. I hope, the small cloud of despair caused by the infructuous talks in Iceland will clear soon and the bright sun of hope will appear again in the firmament. There is no doubt that the Press can do a great deal in moulding the public opinion in favour of the survival of humanity and a lasting peace in the world.

The phenomenon of sensationalizing the negative aspects of life like sex, crime and mayhem is common all over the world. The noble deeds of compassion and human welfare attract less notice by the mass media. If our objective is to create a just and humane society and to eliminate injustice, discrimination and exploitation, then it would be necessary for the press to reorient its policies and change its priorities. India has constantly been raising its voice for bringing about a new international information order, which would provide a fair treatment to the developing world and remove the imbalances created by the more powerful lobbies of the west.

I am glad to know that the theme of your Congress is "Communication-Culture-Religion". Culture represents the totality of way of life, material existence, art, education, moral and spiritual values and outlook towards others. India represents one of the oldest civilizations of the world. A galaxy of philosophers, sages, saints and seers have made their contributions through centuries for the enrichment of human life. It has been a confluence of many religions and a cradle of the cultures of the world. Buddha, Mahavira, Rama, Krishna and Guru Nanak took birth on this soil. The two world religions of Christianity and Islam made their notable contributions in

weaving a common fabric of Indian culture. Moral and religious beliefs and spiritual values of all our people brought into existence a composite Indian culture based on tolerance, mutual accomodation and secularism. The principles of secularism, socialism and democracy have been enshrined in our Constitution. These are the best guarantee of human dignity and honour.

Freedom of professing and propagating the religion of one's choice forms the sheet anchor of our polity. In pursuance of these ideals, India has been supporting the cause of freedom from all types of exploitation and colonialism for peoples everywhere. It is unfortunate that in Southern Africa the cult of political and economic domination based on the unethical and immoral grounds of the colour of the skin is still prevailing as a scar on the noble face of humanity. The press, especially the Catholic Press, would do well to expose the oppressors and help rescue the oppressed from the yoke of racial exploitation. The press can also play a positive role in highlighting the dangers of regional conflicts and the ultimate futility of armed strifes, which invariably result in suffering and misery for the innocent people.

The cult of terrorism has for some time been plaguing the world. The misplaced and fanatic zeal of a few, causes undeserved pain and grief to the unwary victims. The challenge before this Congress, as I see it, is to make the Press a genuine vehicle of spiritual dialogue and the promotion of a genuine secularism. The purpose of any religious faith is to forge unity based on good-will and to promote the forces of harmony, and peace. Its aim is to eliminate hatred, jealousy, avarice and hegemony. The message of any religion is to promote universal love and fraternity. True religion is a cementing force. It helps unite the people rather than separate them. Christianity teaches compassion, charity and service of the poor, the sick and the needy.

It is unwise to create disharmony and discord under the garb of any religion. Everyone should have a right to profess one's own faith and others should not look down upon a creed other than their own. The Press can help build bridges of understanding and increase human happiness.

One salient feature of Christianity has been to develop the regional languages to serve as a vehicle of education as well as communication. I have great pleasure in inaugurating the Fourteenth World Congress of the Catholic Press. I wish it great success in achieving its goals. It would be a real achievement for the Congress to launch upon a long term programme to bring about the kingdom of God on this troubled earth.

## Partners in Ideals

**I** BRING YOU greeting from India. I thank you for your kind words of welcome and for the warmth and generosity of your hospitality.

It is indeed a privilege for me to visit friendly Yugoslavia, a great country at the historic crossroads of Europe. The love for freedom of your people and the saga of their heroic resistance under the leadership of Marshal Tito against fascist aggression, strike a responsive chord in the hearts of our people who also won their battle for freedom, at about the same time.

There is much else that the people of India and Yugoslavia share, apart from their struggle for freedom. Yugoslavia, like India, is a rich mosaic of multiplicity of races, religions and languages welded into a modern nation.

Since the early days of the founding of our young Republics, our two countries have forged a close relationship, under the guidance of Marshal Tito and Pandit Nehru, which has been marked by warmth, sincerity and cooperation.

Our adherence to the policy of Non-alignment is another major bond between us. In Yugoslavia, it was Marshal Tito's indomitable spirit of independence that led your country to shun military alliances. In India too, it was the projection of our country's national ethos under the leadership of Pandit Nehru that led us to the concept of non-alignment. Thirty years ago, three great statesmen—Presidents Tito and Nasser and Prime Minister Nehru—met in Brioni and issued a Declaration calling for rapid progress in global disarmament, for peaceful co-existence and economic justice. The Brioni declaration was the foundation stone of the Non-aligned Movement which had its first Summit Conference in Belgrade five years later.

The Non-aligned Movement has since gone from strength to strength. Today, it encompasses two thirds of mankind and more than a hundred nations. It has been a matter of satisfaction to us that our two countries have worked hand in hand to strengthen the Non-aligned

Movement and to make it more effective in tackling urgent international issues and we will always remember the cooperation rendered by your country during India's chairmanship of the movement.

The most urgent crisis facing mankind today is the threat of a nuclear holocaust engendered by the nuclear arms race. As if this was not enough there is the looming spectre of its spreading to outer space. The first Non-aligned Summit of Belgrade gave the call 25 years ago for a suspension of nuclear test pending conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. This vital step is, however, yet to be taken. In recent years initiatives have been taken by Heads of State/Govt. of six countries, including India, spanning five continents calling for a halt to the testing and development of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, to be followed by a phased programme of reduction of the existing stockpile of nuclear weapons and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. Yugoslavia has warmly welcomed the efforts of the Group of six. The endorsement by friends like Yugoslavia gives us courage and sustenance in our belief that all countries have a role to play in this elemental question of life and death. The Non-aligned Movement has also underlined the linkage between disarmament and development. We hope that the nuclear weapon powers will heed these appeals. We are greatly heartened by the bold initiative of General Secretary Gorbachev to rid the world of nuclear weapons by the year 2000.

Escalating arms race consumes a heavy share of the global budget, especially of the industrialised states, causing structural weaknesses in their economies. Prolonged global recession, high interest rates, massive imbalances in balance of payments and unemployment are some of the ills facing even the industrialised world. The developing countries are faced with the outcome of these problems and now face the phenomenon of net financial flows to the developed world, crushing debt and repayment burden and decline in prices of commodities which they produce. Peace and security in the world is indivisible. There can be no progress in the industrialised North, while the South decays. There is great urgency, therefore, to work actively, unitedly towards the new international economic order. The developing countries must also work towards collective self-reliance by strengthening South-South Cooperation in all fields.

The obnoxious vestiges of colonialism and racism which continue to fester in Southern Africa are a blot on the conscience of mankind.

India, like Yugoslavia, views with deep concern the attempts of the racist pretoria regime to perpetuate the evil system of apartheid and to destabilise the frontline states. The tragic loss of President Samora Machel adds a new dimension to this distressing situation. We urge the international community to stand beside the brave and heroic people of South Africa, Namibia and the Frontline states and take all possible measures, including mandatory sanctions, to bring about the dissolution of the apartheid system and ensure freedom and liberty for the people of South Africa and Namibia. I am happy to note that India and Yugoslavia are amongst the eight countries whose Foreign Ministers have been mandated by the NAM Summit to visit UK, FRG, Japan and the USA to press them to agree to the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa. Both our countries are also members of the committee for Africa Fund, set up by the last NAM Summit. We must jointly work relentlessly towards the complete elimination of the abominable and criminal system of apartheid and the establishment of a non-racial democratic society in South Africa.

Excellency, our discussions have once again confirmed our common approach to important international issues and mutual determination to work together in tackling them. We have followed with sympathy and interest your courageous efforts to overcome your internal problems caused by the global economic crisis. We wish you well in your task of economic stabilization and are confident of your success.

We note, with pleasure, the recent and rapid increase in our economic and commercial exchanges and the prospects for enhanced scientific and technological cooperation between our countries. All this will give concrete content to our already excellent bilateral relationship.

May I request Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen to raise your glasses in a toast—to the health and happiness of H.E. Mr. Sinan Hasani, President of the Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; to the progress and prosperity of the people of Yugoslavia and to abiding friendship, growing cooperation and lasting understanding between our two countries.

## Land of Varieties

**T**HIS VISIT TO your beautiful country and, above all, to this lovely island of Brioni, has been not only heart-warming by its evidence of warm friendship between our countries but also a sentimental remembrance of the Declaration signed here three decades ago by three of the greatest statesmen of our times Josip Broz Tito, Jawaharlal Nehru and Gamel Abdel Nasser.

The tradition of warm and sincere friendship between India and Yugoslavia which Marshal Tito and Pandit Nehru established is being continued by the enlightened leaders of both our countries.

When I see this lovely land of yours with its splendid variety of traditions, languages and peoples I am reminded of India. It is thus natural that we rejoice in your success in the great endeavour of nation building as we do in our own.

Excellency, I bring to you and the people of your Republic the greetings of the people of India with the hope and conviction that our countries will be linked ever closer together in friendship and mutually fruitful cooperation.

I would now like to request your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, to join me in a toast to the health and happiness of His Excellency the President of the Presidency of the Republic of Croatia, for the well-being and prosperity of the people of Yugoslavia, and for abiding friendship between our two nations.

## A Word of Thanksgiving

**A**S WE LEAVE the great and beautiful country of Yugoslavia I would like to convey to Your Excellency our grateful and sincere thanks for your warm and generous hospitality. We have been greatly touched by the warmth of the reception extended to us that reflected the traditional friendliness which has characterised the ties between our two countries. My exchange of views with you has led to greater mutual understanding and to further development of our brief visits to the uniquely beautiful cities of Belgrade and Brioni. We shall always remember with great pleasure our fruitful visit to your great country.

## An Ancient Civilization

I WISH TO express my deep appreciation for the warm welcome extended to me and my delegation since our arrival in Greece. I am particularly touched by your warm hospitality this evening, and your kind and gracious words.

I am delighted to be in your beautiful country and feel privileged in being the first Indian President to pay a State Visit to Greece. I hope this visit will contribute to the further development and strengthening of the very friendly relations already existing between our two countries and peoples. Greece and India are situated far from each other, but only in the geographical sense. Contacts between our two countries from times immemorial are well known and there are references to colonies of Indian merchants and philosophers in old Grecian cities and theories about an India element in Pythagorean thought. It is well known that Greek Art and Sciences have influenced India in many ways. These ancient contacts between our two countries have been renewed in more recent times in various ways and through high level visits. Your distinguished predecessor His Excellency President Constantine Karamanlis visited our country in March 1982, and the visit to Greece of our former Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi in 1983 as well as the visit of His Excellency Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou in January this year to India, are links in this long chain of history.

“India” and “Greece”, these two words, when spoken in the same breath, immediately stir deep emotions in the hearts and minds of all those who think about human history, civilisation, and roots of culture for the world as a whole. Indo-Greek cultural contacts are very ancient and the two peoples interacted in various ways in the past. Philologists have established that the Greek “Zeus” is actually nothing different from the Indian “Div”. Athens has produced giants of intellect and men of genius. The word democracy originated here. Village town and Republics have been known in other civilisations also. In my own country, there are records of them during and after



the Buddha's time. But the idea of all citizens meeting at one place and taking decisions of state was refined in Athens and other Greek cities.

Apart from the fact that Greece and India are both ancient civilisations with deep roots, we have other common factors in that both our peoples had to suffer from foreign domination at the hands of more aggressive forces of various kinds and we have both successfully overthrown such dominations. Having emerged into freedom and independence, both our countries are determined to work for peace and freedom in the world. This determination comes naturally to us in view of the long history, lessons of which have sunk deep into the consciousness of our peoples. In this context, I might mention that the fact that India and Greece are members of the 5 Continent Peace Initiative, which has had a great impact on world public opinion, is not a coincidence, but a natural outcome of our historical experience and cultural ethos.

Mr. President, we in India are committed to the principles of democracy, as you are in Greece. We also believe in socialism and are striving to improve the lot of the people in every possible way. In the international arena we have similar views on all major problems.

The core of our foreign policy is Non-alignment. Non-alignment stands for the right of every country, big or small, to decide for itself on issues of importance and contribute to global peace and prosperity without fear or pressure.

We believe that a durable peace can be based only on peaceful co-existence, not in a dangerous and illusory search for a balance of power, which, in this nuclear age, translates into a balance of terror. Disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, is for us a matter of great concern and high priority. The six countries from five continents which launched the initiative for nuclear disarmament in May 1984 are linked together in a noble cause, indeed, the most important single issue facing the mankind today. I say this because one may ask, what use can other human rights have, when the very right to life is threatened by an unprecedented massing of weapons of destruction. Scientists all over the world have pointed out that the consequences of a nuclear catastrophe will not be limited to any one part of the world regardless of where such nuclear explosions may take place but will affect humanity as a whole. There is, therefore, absolute justification for all countries, big and small, to demand an end to the nuclear arms race. It is very natural that the six-nation initiative has got a response from people throughout the world. The presentation of the 'Beyond

War Award' to the six authors of the Delhi Declaration of 1985, and the simultaneous satellite relay from all six capitals as well as headquarters of the Beyond War Organisation in the US, had focussed world attention on the dangers of nuclear holocaust. Recently, the six countries have on receipt of replies to their approach to the two super powers after their meeting in Mexico, again issued a statement on October 3 reiterating their belief in the need for a halt on nuclear testing and have also repeated their offer to provide assistance in verification. The recent Summit in Reykjavik has belied the hopes and aspirations of human kind. We hope that agreement to reduce the arsenals will be reached before long.

Mr. President, I am conscious of the fact that the arms race is linked closely with the existence of various political and social conflicts in the world. While in the short term we have to take urgent steps to halt the dangerous arms race, in the long run we have to work hard in solving the various political problems which bedevil relations between countries big and small. I am glad to know that the leadership of your country has always taken a positive and progressive view in this regard in various international forums. I should like to mention only a few issues this evening.

The tragic conflict between Iran and Iraq has defied solution in the last 6 years. De-escalation and cessation of hostilities are desired by all countries and a way has to be found to bring an end to this unfortunate conflict.

The denial of an independent state to the Palestinian people in their own homeland is a source of tension in West Asia, indeed in the world. Israel must withdraw from all occupied Arab lands and we have consistently and uncompromisingly supported the Arab cause. We reaffirm our support for the struggle of the Palestinian people led by the PLO as their sole legitimate representative.

Peace in this region is threatened by the tension in Cyprus. We have always supported unified, sovereign, independent and non-aligned Cyprus in which all communities live together in amity and goodwill. We hope that ongoing efforts to find a solution will fructify soon.

The situation in Southern Africa is explosive. The South African regime persists with its abhorrent apartheid policy. This is a blot on the dignity of the human race and potentially a dangerous factor for world peace. The International Community has to put necessary pressure on the South African regime to alter its present policies.

In this context, I must refer to the problem of terrorism which poses

a serious threat to peace and tranquility in many parts of the world. We in India condemn all forms of terrorism and appeal to all countries of the world to do their utmost to overcome this problem. There are cases where certain countries aid and abet directly or indirectly acts of terrorism, and this practice should come to an end. The Non-aligned Movement has also consistently condemned all forms of terrorism, whether committed by individuals or organised by States.

Excellency, I am aware that on all these issues you have similar views and I am confident that we can work together in all these spheres. Our bilateral relations are developing steadily and apart from the close political cooperation and cultural exchanges there are good prospects for economic cooperation. I am hoping to visit tomorrow a joint Indo-Greek Project here and am confident that there is considerable scope for many such projects in the future in both our countries for our mutual benefits.

I have special pleasure in proposing a toast to the personal health and happiness of Your Excellency and Madame Sartzetakis, to the well-being and prosperity of the friendly Greek people and to the further consolidation of relations between our Governments and peoples.

## A Nation of Indomitable Spirit

IT IS A great honour and privilege to be in your beautiful country. I thank you for the gracious words of welcome and for the generous hospitality we have received. It is my first visit to Poland and I was told to prepare myself for the cold climate but the spontaneous warmth of the hospitality showered on us has more than made up for the slight chill in the air.

Since historical times, Poland and its great people have been known for their creativity and energy as well as for their valour and love of freedom. Its soil has produced the most eminent of philosophers, scientists and musicians. Though apart in geographical terms, India and Poland are close in spirit and there are deep affinities between us. We in India have great admiration for the heroic anti-fascist struggle waged by Poland during the Second World War. In our fight for national liberty, we drew inspiration from the manner in which the indomitable spirit of Poland and the Polish people prevailed against overwhelming odds.

In more recent times, we have followed with interest the achievements of modern Poland in building a strong, prosperous and independent State. In your earnest endeavours for national reconstruction and economic recovery, our sincere best wishes are with you today as always.

The tradition of high level contacts has imparted a significant impetus to the development of Indo-Polish ties over the years. Your Excellency's visit to India in February last year was a landmark and provided an excellent opportunity for a review of our wide-ranging relations.

Our two nations are united in a common crusade for enduring peace which is a basic precondition for human existence and development. The problem facing us today is not merely of war and peace; important though it is. We are actually hovering between life and death with the nuclear sword of Damocles poised over our planet. We

must, therefore, all direct our efforts towards the elimination of the threat of a nuclear holocaust. Poland's commitment and contribution to disarmament are well known. We greatly appreciate the continuing support extended to the six-nation initiatives by the Polish people's Republic and other socialist countries. It is only through common endeavours that we will be able to save this planet, the only one we have.

We, in India believe in peace and cooperation. It is this simple belief which underlies our attempts within the framework of the Non-aligned Movement as well as outside, to prevent the emergence of new conflicts and diminish existing tensions as far as possible. We must arrest the deterioration in the international climate. Within our own region, we have embarked on the path of intensified wide-ranging cooperation through SAARC. The results have been encouraging so far and the forthcoming summit in Bangalore will hopefully further accelerate the process.

Poland and India have worked together towards reduction of International disparities and we fully endorse Poland's efforts to promote cooperation between East and West. We welcome Poland's support of North-South cooperation. Both our countries remain dedicated to the establishment of the new international economic order. We look forward to continuing our excellent cooperation with Poland in various international forums.

Poland and India are traditional friends. Our mutually beneficial cooperation is based on a solid foundation of understanding, respect and mutual trust. We can derive satisfaction from the overall development of our bilateral relations. We have tried to take advantage of each other's strengths to grow strong together. There is keen interest in each other's culture and traditions. A vast scope exists for mutual enrichment through further developing our cultural exchanges. Contacts between peoples add a fuller meaning and substance to relations between States.

The Indo-Polish Joint Commission for economic, scientific and technical cooperation which met earlier this year in New Delhi evaluated positively the progress achieved and indicated the areas where substantial potential exists for further fruitful cooperation. We hope to double the volume of bilateral trade by 1990. Both countries stand to gain from an expansion and diversification of our ties, particularly in science and technology, trade and in economic fields.

May I request all the distinguished guests présent here to join me in a toast: to the health of H.E. General Wojciech Jaruzelski, Chairman of the State Council of the Polish People's Republic; to the health of all the distinguished guests; to the progress and prosperity of the friendly Polish people; to friendship and cooperation between our two countries, and last but not the least, to world peace.

## Indo-Polish Ties

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be present here and to meet the members of the Indo-Polish Friendship Society. The Society is a true reflection of the traditional friendship and cooperation which exist between our two countries, as also of the long and abiding interest and admiration our peoples have for the history, culture and achievements of each other. I am aware of Polish interest in India which goes back to the times of Gaspar da Gama of Poznan, who had taken up service of the Ruler of Bijapur towards the end of 15th century. Walenty Majewski had studied Sanskrit alphabet and summarised Ramayana by 1809, while Joachim Lelewel had written the 'Ancient History of India' which was considered one of the most standard works on India in those days. Contributions of pioneers like Leon Mankowski, who is considered the first Polish scholar in Sanskrit and had published a treatise on Panchatantra and Kadambari, have been remarkable. His successor Andrzej Gawronski published many a dissertation on Mrichchhakatika, Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, and others, and this noble tradition has been successfully pursued upto modern times. I am not at all surprised to hear that there are well-established Indology Departments which also teach Indian languages in the Warsaw University as well as in the Jagiellonian University in Cracow.

In India the Indo-Polish Cultural Society was established in Calcutta in 1939 with poet Rabindranath Tagore as its Honorary President and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan as its President. The Indo-Polish Friendship Society was set up in Poland on 25th June, 1957. Its first President Oskar Lange, former Vice President of Poland and an eminent economist, was also known in India having participated in the drawing up of our second Five Year Plan.

We have just completed a short tour of your historical and magnificent city and I am deeply impressed by the strength and resurgent spirit that the Polish people have displayed in rebuilding Warsaw from the rubble. I congratulate you, as citizens of this great city, on your achievement.

Friendship between our two countries is traditional and time-tested. It is not merely between the leaders but also between the peoples. These links between our peoples have been forged by those in Poland who have known our country and have loved her. These people took great trouble to study our philosophy, culture, music and art and found the eternal human values which appeal to the Polish soul. The members of your Society are following these traditions. It is a measure of your active interest that the Indo-Polish Friendship Society has 17 branches in Poland with more than 5000 members.

We in India fully reciprocate the warm feelings and sincere friendship of the Polish people towards India and we appreciate greatly the work done here and in other branches of the Society. I take this opportunity to wish you all success in your endeavours.



## A Word of Gratitude

I WOULD LIKE to thank you on behalf of the members of my party and on my own behalf for the excellent dinner and for the generous words addressed to us. We have truly enjoyed our visit to this beautiful city which is rightly considered the cultural capital of Poland. We have been fascinated by the historical and architectural monuments of which the magnificent Wawel Castle with its remarkable collection of tapestries, paintings and others works of art is the most impressive. The 14th century Jagiellonian University, whose galaxy of alumni included the great astronomer Nicholas Copernicus, is not only a great and ancient seat of learning but also a magnificent work of architecture. The Church of the Virgin Mary by the side of Cracow's famous Market Square is a beautiful memorial to history and culture.

One can wax eloquent on the beauty as well as the history of this former capital of Poland where kings were crowned for nearly four centuries. Most mercifully Cracow was saved from the depradations of the Nazis, a monument to whose inhumanity has been thoughtfully preserved in the neighbourhood of Cracow, at Auschwitz, as a warning to mankind against such pitfalls.

We are indeed most happy to be here and look forward to seeing other interesting sights tomorrow. I once again thank the President for his excellent reception to us.

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Speech in reply to the President (Mayor) of Cracow's speech at the latter's dinner in his honour, Cracow, Poland, November 8, 1986

## Bridging the Gap

THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT has come a long way since 1946, when it was first conceived by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The main objectives of the concept to keep away from power politics of groups of nations aligned against one another and to help the subjugated and dependent countries to achieve emancipation from the colonial powers. It also repudiated the Nazi doctrine of racialism. It visualised closer cooperation among nations and peace and human freedom everywhere.

The concept of Non-alignment was further developed in 1961, when the first conference of Heads of State Government was held in Belgrade attended by 25 nations with 3 observers. Elaborating the theme, Pandit Nehru said in the Conference: "The word Non-aligned can be differently interpreted, but basically it was coined and used with the meaning of being Non-aligned with the great power blocs of the world.

'Non-aligned' has a negative meaning. But if you give it a positive connotation, it means nations which object to lining up for war purposes, to military blocs, to military alliances and the like. We keep away from such an approach and we want to throw our weight in favour of peace.

In effect, therefore, when there is a crisis involving the possibility of war, the very fact that we are un-aligned should stir us to feel that, more than ever, it is up to us to do whatever we can to prevent such a calamity coming down upon us."

The exponents of the theory of Non-alignment intended to create a moral force, a combined thinking on the issue of war and peace. The poor and the weak countries and those newly liberated from colonial oppression yearned passionately for peace and had deep aversion to the piling up of nuclear arms in the world.

One of the objectives of the Non-aligned movement was and still continues to be the complete disarmament as an absolute necessity for durable peace. The environment of arms-race has created a lingering

fear of an armed conflict, which will spell ruin to the whole mankind. The only way to allay this fear is to strive for reduction and total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The concept of Non-alignment has gained a wide appeal. Now over 100 independent nations of Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America are votaries to this movement. About two thirds of mankind has expressed its faith in non-alignment.

The movement advocates peaceful co-existence for the very survival of the human race, because another world conflict is most likely to result in a total doom and total extinction of our planet.

Smt. Indira Gandhi called upon the Non-aligned nations to gather strength from one another and to carry forward the unfinished political and economic revolution. Apart from arms race, economic disparities among nations are considered a potent cause for conflict. Non-alignment, therefore, became a catalyst of a new world economic order, in which small and weak nations could be assured of self-respect, dignity and justice.

Pandit Nehru's concept of Non-alignment suffered a severe strain after Chinese aggression on our soil in 1962. India has always considered China as a traditional friend. Throughout our history we have believed in cordial relations with our neighbours. But it is unfortunate that China did not respond to our friendship in the same spirit. Recently we have again witnessed China's intrusion into our territory in Arunachal Pradesh. They have constructed a helipad at Sundorong Chu and a military encampment. This development cannot be glossed over, as the Chinese stance has injured the sentiments of our 700 million people. China has gone a step further and raised an objection to the grant of full-fledged statehood to Arunachal Pradesh. This territory was and is an integral part of our country and according it a status of full-fledged State is purely our own constitutional arrangement. The Chinese attitude does not go for strengthening the foundations of our friendship which we have cherished for so long. They would do well as to abandon their expansionist tendency and try to live in a spirit of good-neighbourliness, mutual respect and peaceful co-existence. India believes in peaceful solutions to all disputes and in pursuance of this policy we have been engaged in a dialogue with the Chinese government at official level. I do hope that China will understand the reality and will not do anything which might endanger the tenor of peace. It is for our Government to protect the sovereignty and defend the integrity of our borders.

Ever since Independence we have tried to maintain good neighbourly relations with Pakistan, but three times she launched armed aggression against us. The aggressive attitude of Pakistan has always cast a heavy cloud on their affirmation of peaceful intentions. Pakistan is a member of the non-alignment movement. But instead of pursuing peace, she has been acquiring deadly and sophisticated weapons from USA, China and other sources, ostensibly for use against the danger from Afghanistan. But the past events have proved without any doubt that such arms have been used against India. Pakistan's relentless efforts to obtain material from Western powers and China and its undue interest in our internal affairs do not speak well of its real intent. It will naturally cause strain to the non-aligned movement.

It is also highly unfortunate that no end appears to be in sight as yet to the Iraq-Iran conflict, which has caused so much loss of life and property. India had friendly relations with both these countries and we are naturally concerned with their welfare. I do hope that India and the other non-aligned nations will be able to persuade both these nations to end the war in the interest of the well-being of their peoples.

Another most important task before the non-aligned nations is to secure a just international economic order. The cleavage between the rich and the poor nations is continuing and is further widening. Efforts have to continue to reduce economic disparities among nations. To this end greater economic co-operation and mutual help among the non-aligned countries is called for. It is important to banish poverty, hunger and disease. Survival of mankind depends on the ability of the leaders of the powerful nations to minimise the risks of war and to reduce inequalities and inequities.

I commend the efforts of the Indian Council of World Affairs to organise various programmes to celebrate the 25th anniversary of NAM. I am particularly glad that the Council has involved the youths from various schools, colleges and universities in competitions on NAM to heighten awareness of its role. The youths have to shoulder the responsibilities of this country tomorrow and I appeal to them to work for peace and universal brotherhood. They have also to defend the integrity, dignity and honour of the country from any external threat, as they have to foster the unity and prosperity of the country within.

I congratulate the prize-winners in various competitions and give them my best wishes. My best wishes to you all.

## Attaining New Heights

IT GIVES ME immense pleasure to welcome you to India as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. We thank you for conveying to us the regards and good wishes of His Excellency Haider Abu Bakar Al Attas, the President of People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. We are also grateful for the warm and friendly sentiments expressed by you about our country.

Relations between the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and India date back in history when Aden as a hub of commercial activity linked India to Africa and the West. In recent times these contacts have been further strengthened by meaningful exchanges between the peoples of the two countries. These exchanges have greatly facilitated in the common bonds of religion, culture and tradition. It is most gratifying to note that the India community in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, had made its modest contribution to the growth of economic activity in your country and by merging with the mainstream has lent strength to the social fabric of Yemen's society.

Having experienced tyranny and exploitation by the colonial rulers, both countries are devoting their attention to the problems we confront to consolidate our hard won independence. Emanating out of this awareness both countries stand committed to the solidarity and growing self-reliance of the developing countries. Our policy of extending economic and technical assistance to friendly third world countries reflects an attachment to this goal.

Excellency, underlying the global viewpoint of India is the basic and fundamental policy of Non-alignment and denunciation of domination in any form—political, economic or cultural. An important element of our foreign policy is our commitment to follow a policy of friendly relations with all countries. The ties of amity between People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and India are

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Speech on the occasion of credentials presentation by Ambassador of Democratic Republic of Yemen, New Delhi, January 16, 1987

reflected fully in our shared objectives to promote peace, development and disarmament. India's unflinching support to the Palestinian and Arab cause is well known, as indeed, its support to the people of South Africa in their just and humane struggle against the ignominy of apartheid.

India has always adhered to the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes through negotiations. It has fully supported the United Nations Resolution declaring Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace. We have made fervent appeals both to Iran and Iraq to put an end to the fratricidal war in the Gulf. We will continue with these efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement in this region.

Peace and stability in the world are essential to save humankind from the scourge of hunger and poverty. It is out of this conviction that India seeks to put an end to the escalating nuclear arms race so that resources can be diverted from armament to development. We are equally committed to the establishment of just and equitable international economic order since the present divide between the North and the South constitutes yet another threat to international peace and security.

Excellency, over the years, our bilateral relations have diversified. The growing cooperation between the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and India can only further consolidate the friendly relations between our countries and peoples. We are confident that with your Excellency's personal efforts, these relations will attain new heights.

I wish to take this opportunity to assure Your Excellency that you will receive the fullest cooperation of my Government in your efforts to further strengthen the excellent relations that exist between our two countries.

May I, Excellency, also request you to convey my best wishes to His Excellency the President of People's Democratic Republic of Yemen for his good health and for the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Excellency, I wish you a fruitful and enjoyable stay in India.

## New Vistas of Self-Reliance

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome you to India as the first Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Saharwi Arab Democratic Republic. I would like to thank your Excellency for conveying the good wishes and greetings of your Government and people which we most sincerely and warmly reciprocate. I would also like to thank you, Excellency for your kind and friendly references to our country.

Excellency, this is a historic moment in our relations. It formalises the close relationship which has existed between us even before India's recognition of the Saharwi Arab Democratic Republic on October 1, 1985. The opening of the Saharwi Arab Democratic Republic Embassy in New Delhi, I am confident, will further consolidate these relations and will lead to the establishment and development of wide ranging bilateral contacts in fields of mutual interest and benefit to our peoples.

We are aware Excellency, of the difficult time your country is passing through. India is opposed to domination in any form—political, social or economic. We believe that development can take place only in an atmosphere of peace, justice and freedom. Having ourselves struggled long and hard against colonial rule and oppression, we have always been sympathetic to the Polisario's struggle for independence and have consistently supported the just and honourable cause of the Saharwi people. We earnestly hope that the combined efforts of the Secretary General of the United Nations and the President of the Organisation of African Unity will soon bear fruit and that an early solution to the problem in Western Sahara can be brought about in a spirit of peace, understanding and good will.

Excellency, I would like to assure you of the fullest cooperation of my Government in the discharge of your functions and in your efforts to strengthen and consolidate the existing friendly relations between

our two countries. I wish you a pleasant and rewarding stay in India and all success in your mission.

May I, Excellency, also request you to convey my best wishes to His Excellency the President of the Saharwi Arab Democratic Republic for his personal well-being and good health and the greetings of the Government and people of India to the Government and the friendly people of the Saharwi Arab Democratic Republic.



## All Round Cooperation

I AM VERY happy to receive the letters whereby His Excellency President Kaunda accredited you as the High Commissioner of your country to India. I also extend to you a warm welcome to our country.

It is very difficult to talk about the relations between Zambia and India without repeating the obvious and without appearing to use worn out phrases. The relations between our two countries could well be a model of close and friendly relations between non-aligned countries. The leaders of our two countries have had close personal relations based on frankness and mutual understanding. The two Governments have a long experience of working with each other and have evolved very fruitful areas of cooperation in political, economic, commercial, technical and cultural spheres. This makes for an extensive network of relations at several levels between the Governments and the peoples of our two countries.

The indeed should be so between two countries like India and Zambia which have had similar historical experiences. After independence, both our countries have followed independent foreign policies. They have been constant, faithful and active members of the non-aligned movement. Their approaches on important issues of international politics and international economic relations have been similar, if not identical. They have worked together and in harmony for the de-colonisation of Africa and the two countries are at one with each other on their approach to the questions of Namibia's independence and apartheid in South Africa. They also agree on the means for achieving one and ending the other.

This constitutes an impressive list of areas of concordance. Yet no two countries can afford to be complacent about the good relations existing between them. These relations have to be nurtured with great care through exchanges of views, discussions and mutual visits. I am happy to say that our two Governments have been very conscious of this and have maintained a constant rhythm of contacts between them.

Only recently, we had the privilege of welcoming the Prime Minister of your country among us. His visit gave us an opportunity to review the entire range of relations between our two countries and I am confident that we shall, as a result, be able to deepen and strengthen our mutual cooperation.

President Kaunda is held in the highest esteem in this country. In our eyes he is not only the Head of State of a country with which we have the closest of relations but he is a personal friend of many of us. He is one of the greatest sons of Africa and a leader of international stature.

I request you to transmit to President Kaunday my friendliest greetings and best wishes. May I request you to transmit to the friendly people of your country my best wishes for their well being and prosperity on my own behalf and on behalf of the people of India.

I wish you a happy, successful and fruitful stay in this country. The Government of India will do its best to make your mission successful and I assure of Government of India's fullest cooperation

## Sharing Democratic Ideals

ON BEHALF OF the Government and people of India, it is my privilege to extend to you and members of your delegation a warm welcome to India. I am confident that your visit, the first to India by a President of Peru, will further strengthen the close bonds of friendship existing between our two countries. Your sojourn here is brief, but I hope it will enable you to have a glimpse of our country's cultural heritage and some idea of the abiding commitment of the Indian people to democracy, development and peace.

India and Peru are geographically distant, but our peoples both inheritors of rich and ancient civilisations, are linked by the warmth of friendship. We are both dedicated to the fulfilment of the principles of the Non-aligned Movement and have worked steadfastly towards this end. We shall continue to do so.

Excellency, we have been observing recent developments in Latin America with deep concern. We firmly believe in the inalienable right of all nations to choose their own political and economic systems without external interference or threat. We welcome the restoration of democracy among the countries of your continent. We are convinced that eventually justice will triumph and the people of the region will be able to devote themselves to the pursuit of economic development and social progress. We admire your own dedication and efforts to achieve these ends.

Once again, Excellency, I wish you a pleasant and fruitful visit.

## Survival of Humanity

IT IS INDEED a privilege for me to extend to you a very warm and cordial welcome on your first visit to India. You have come from half the world away to be in our midst when our nation celebrates the Republic Day. The celebrations you will witness mark the 37th anniversary of the establishment of our Sovereign mark the 37th anniversary of the establishment of our Sovereign Democratic Republic as the fruitful culmination of our national struggle for independence. Our freedom movement under the leadership of the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, treading the path of non-violence, brought down a mighty empire and freed our people, was an event unique in world history:

India and Perud are both inheritors of ancient civilisations and cultures which have contributed much to the progress and history of mankind. Our peoples share common values and aspirations. We are democracies which cherish freedom and equality of all human beings. Our thinkers and leaders were guided by philosophies of tolerance and compassion and shared a visio of a peaceful and equitable world order. Drawing from the strength of our past, we are facing up boldly to the present challenges and look to the future with confidence.

On international issues, we share common ideals and similarity of views. As active members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries we have asserted our independence to express our views on international issues in full freedom and as equal members of the international community. We believe that the Movement has played a positive role in the evolution of international political and economic relations and in finding solutions to critical problems—a role which must be further enhanced.

We are both strongly opposed to colonialism and racism. It is significant that your bilateral visit coincides with the Summit of the Committee of Nine on the Africa Fund Convened in pursuance of decisions taken at Harare. Apartheid goes against the grain of our fundamental values. We believe that the successful Summit which has

Just concluded, will mark an important milestone in our quest for the eradication of this evil and the independence of Namibia.

No sensitive person anywhere today can be complacent about the future of the world. The growing stockpiles of nuclear armaments positioned round the globe are an unmitigated evil and menace to the very survival of humanity. Yet, the nuclear-weapons powers are spending billions on new research in death-dealing technology. All this is sought to be justified in the name of peace. We who care for peace must reject this convoluted argument. We want peace, and nuclear disarmament because a nuclear war will kill all peoples, not only the combatants. The survival of humankind is a bigger cause than the anxiety of some nations to perpetuate their own pre-eminence and to pursue false doctrines of balance of terror. This was the message of the Five-continent Six-nation initiative which was endorsed by the Harare Summit.

The tensions prevailing in Central America, which represent a real threat to international peace and security, are a cause for deep concern. We have appreciated Peru's constructive role as an active member of the Contadora Support Group to resolve by peaceful means the serious problems facing the region. There must be a resumption of negotiations and dialogue to achieve a just and lasting settlement based on respect for the right to self-determination and ensuring the security, sovereignty and independence of all States in the region. The countries of the region must not be dragged into East-West Bloc rivalries or be subject to foreign armed intervention or threat of destabilisation.

As developing countries, India and Peru face the challenge of continuing developmental efforts during a period of acute international economic instability. The developing countries can meet this challenge by pooling their resources and experiences and cooperating in diverse fields such as trade, technical research and training, agriculture and small industries and thus reduce dependence on the developed world. At the same time it is imperative that the developed countries realise the necessity for cooperating in the establishment of a New International Economic Order which would benefit their peoples no less than ours. It is our earnest desire that our bilateral relations should grow in strength and content. I am confident that Peru and India can establish a strong basis for mutually beneficial relationship in the spirit of South-South co-operation.

Peru represents a whole series of values and achievements. The magnificence of Machu-Pichu speaks of the high degree of socio-political development and civilization that Peru had attained in the centuries past. We have been following with interest and admiration your vision of a new Peru which would combine the best in her inheritance with the better aspects of modernity. You personify maturity and political realism. You have sought to carry forward with dedication the historic achievement of the great liberators, Simon Bolivar, San Martin and Haya de la Torre, for the emancipation of your people and for building of a united Latin America.

Mr. President, we hop that your visit to our country, though shor, will prove not only pleasant but also interesting and stimulating. You will have an opportunity to observe our efforts aimed at overcoming the obstacles of underdevelopment and to have a glimpse of some of the outstanding monuments of our culure and history as well as of the most modern aspects of our scientific progress and industrial development. Everywhere you will be assured of a warm welcome.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now invite you to join me in a toast to His Excellency President Alan Garcia Perez and to friendship between India and Peru.

## Commitment to Peace

IT GIVES ME great pleasure, on behalf of the people of India and on my own behalf, to extend to you a warm welcome to India. We are pleased that your daughter has been able to join you and I am sure she will be able to get a glimpse of the culture and diversity of India.

Mr. President, we live in a world beset with problems. The International Year of Peace, 1986, has just ended the achievement of the welfare for the common man. The great powers have recognised that a nuclear war cannot be won, and that one must never be fought. Nevertheless, people all over the world were disappointed at the outcome of the Summit at Reykjavik. Enormous sums of money are expended to prop up the armaments race, while three-fourths of the world population strive hard to live at a bare subsistence level.

Conscious of the need to prevent a global disaster, India joined hands with the leaders of Argentina, Greece, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania, in issuing the Six-Nation Appeal to call for a halt to the nuclear arms race, prevention of an arms race in outer space and the conclusion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. A few days ago, we again jointly issued a statement urging upon the two Super Powers recommence comprehensive talks to prevent an arms race in space, terminate it on earth and ultimately eliminate nuclear arms everywhere. We hope that 1987 will provide an opportunity for the USA and the Soviet Union to agree on a number of important disarmament measures and thereby enable the promise of Reykjavik to become a reality.

Mr. President, we greatly appreciate and value your country's firm commitment to peace and disarmament and your considerable and continuing contribution to the peace-keeping role of the United Nations. I am confident that in these troubled times, when mankind is threatened with annihilation, world leaders would display wisdom and courage and help to bring about sanity and understanding. It is still not too late to usher in an International Era of Peace.

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Speech at the Banquet in honour of the President of the Republic of Finland H.E. Mr. Mauno Koivisto, New Delhi, February 3, 1987

Mr. President, your country is known for its concern for the welfare of mankind, its policy of peace and welfare, and its sympathetic understanding of the problems of the developing countries. Despite the harsh and uncongenial climate, the Finnish people, by their hard work, grit and determination, have carved out for themselves a life of prosperity and well-being. And, more importantly, they are willing to share this prosperity with their less fortunate brethren. We greatly appreciate this and extend to you, and to the people of Finland, our felicitations and good wishes in this Jubilee Year of Finnish Independence.

Twenty-two years ago, your distinguished predecessor, the late Dr. Urho Kekkonen, paid the first state visit from Finland. In subsequent years, there have been several exchanges at various levels. Bilateral relations have improved in various areas, especially in the economic and commercial fields. We, on our part, have been engaged continuously in the gigantic task of improving the living standards of a vast population. We have chosen the path of planned economic development which has paid us rich dividends. We have laid the foundations for an industrial society, improved the productivity of our agriculture, and are now concentrating on a technological upgradation with a view to bringing science and technology to the doorsteps of the common man. In this effort, we look forward to cooperation and assistance from all our friends. Finland and India have already established institutional mechanisms, such as the Joint Commission and the Joint Business Council to ensure speedy implementation of Indo-Finnish collaboration. We are aware that Finland is an important source of technology in a number of fields in which I am sure we can cooperate to mutual benefit.

I have learnt with gratification that the Finnish national epic, *Kalavela*, is now being translated into Hindi. Your scholars have taken a keen interest in India's past and the joint project to publish a photographic corpus of the Indus seals is an example of our mutual interest in each other's culture.

Mr. President, I hope you and the members of your delegation will have a pleasant stay in India and enjoy seeing something of our country.

May I now request you, Ladies and Gentlemen, to join me in proposing a toast to the health and personal well-being of His Excellency the President of Finland and Madame Koivisto, to the people of Finland and to Indo-Finnish friendship and cooperation.



## Centre of Ancient Empire

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome a distinguished diplomat from Africa in our midst especially as relations between our two countries are achieving a formal shape.

Our two countries have known about each other since ancient days. Mali was the centre of the ancient empires of Songhai and Mandingo reaching its heights of development in the fourteenth century under Mansa Moussa. The fabulous city of Timbaktu is a legend worth recounting. The medieval library of Ahmad Baba, a great historian and religious scholar, had a collection of several thousands of volumes. Also standing in this beautiful city is the oldest Djinguereyber mosque built south of Sahara in the fourteenth century. The modern nation of Mali under the leadership of President M. Traore has been Influenced by the tradition of this great heritage.

We in India have acquired considerable expertise in a variety of fields. These include our achievements in agriculture, industry, health education and the building up of considerable scientific and technical skills. We are keen to share our knowhow with our friends in Africa.

Politically, our two countries follow a policy of non-alignment and there exist common approaches towards several issues of mutual interest. Our great leader Mahatma Gandhi travelled to South Africa at the turn of the century and began his movement of Non-cooperation to overcome tyranny and despotism. Today the Non-aligned Movement has emphasised even more the quest for freedom in South Africa as we launch our struggle against Apartheid and exploitation. We call for the release of South African freedom fighters from Pretoria jails and the establishment of a democratic government in that country so as to ensure the just rights of the black majority.

We also extend our support to efforts towards forging of closer political ties between the African nations under the auspices of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) and the building of multilateral economic relations in the African continent.

I welcome your Excellency once again to India and we are delighted to have you in our midst. We hope that the Indo-Malian Cultural Agreement will soon come into effect paving the way for greater understanding between us.

Thanking your Excellency.

## Love for Freedom

IT IS WITH great pleasure that I welcome you as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federative Republic of Brazil. You represent a great country which is geographically distant and yet linked to us by traditional ties and friendship. Our peoples share not only the history of a colonial past but also a common love for freedom, peace and justice. Both have achieved much by way of economic development and play an increasingly active role in international affairs. We have great potential for cooperation in various fields for the mutual benefit of our two people who constitute a substantial portion of the developing world.

We are today living in a world of tensions. Super power rivalries, mutual suspicions and the arms race have created a situation which threatens the very existence of humanity. The situation in Central America is a cause for concern. We look forward to a solution of the crisis as a result of the untiring efforts of the Contadora and its Support Group of which your country is an active member. Faced with such a situation, there is an increasing need today, more than ever before, for cooperation between countries at all levels. It is gratifying to note that our two countries, with a similar perspective on most issues, have been working together in various international fora, particularly for the common goal of a 'New International Economic Order.'

We in India have deep admiration for the dynamic economic performance of your country. We are looking forward to the opportunity of receiving President Jost Sarney in our country. We hope that your tenure in India will be both enjoyable and fruitful. I assure you that we would reciprocate all efforts for forging closer links between our two countries and that the Government of India will render to you all possible assistance and cooperation that you would require during your tenure. I extend to you my best wishes for your success as well as personal happiness.

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Speech while Ambassador of Brazil presents credentials, New Delhi, February 27, 1987

## Beneficial Cooperation

**I**T IS WITH great pleasure that we welcome tonight the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the gracious Madame Elena Ceausescu amongst us. We have been keenly looking forward to this visit.

Mr. President, you are no stranger to this ancient land which has had centuries' old links with your country which straddled the old trade routes from India to Western Asia and onward to Europe. The kinship between our languages and the influence of Vedic philosophy, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata on eminent Romanian intellectuals have created spiritual and intellectual bonds between our peoples. Another example of our early contacts and cooperation is that of the great Romanian sculptor Constantin Brincusi who was invited by the Holkar King of Indore to build a temple.

These old links, Mr. President, have been reinforced by new ones in a world which today is so much more complex and interdependent. Thus, even while we have different socio-political and economic systems, not only have we friendly and mutually cooperative ties in diverse fields, we have also joined hands in the international struggle against racism and apartheid, and for peace and disarmament. The chain of high level exchanges epitomised by our Late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi's visits to your beautiful and hospitable land and Your Excellency's return visits have established an enduring relationship of mutual understanding at the highest levels which are endorsed by our two peoples.

The wide-ranging, in depth-discussions that we have had with Your Excellency, have stimulated the exchange of ideas on some of the most significant international issues. The deteriorating international situation, Excellency, causes all statesmen and governments grave concern. The danger of a nuclear catastrophe is already hanging over humanity. The frightening spectre of the nuclear arms race being extended to outer space augments the danger. Indiraji had said that

"Peace is no longer an alternative, it is an imperative. Lasting security lies not in armaments but in dialogue and understanding". This is as true today as when she said it six years ago in Bucharest. There is growing awareness of the looming danger amongst an increasing number of world leaders, Governments, intellectuals, scientists and broad sections of humanity. In this context it has been a proud privilege of India to be associated with the Six Nation Five Continent Nuclear Disarmament Initiative, the Harare Appeal of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Delhi Declaration for a peaceful and non-violent world.

Disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, Excellency, is a crying need of the hour. We, therefore, urge all states, irrespective of their size and regardless of their socio-economic systems, to join together in finding solutions that would halt and reverse the nuclear arms race and reduce tensions in the world.

As developing countries, India and Romania have a paramount need to conserve their scarce resources for the challenging tasks of socio-economic development and the material and cultural uplift of their peoples. They know that there is an umbilical linkage between disarmament and development. We have, therefore, raised our voice in the international forums for diversion of the massive resources, presently committed to armament expenditure, to the developmental needs of the world.

In our own neighbourhood, we find that our efforts for sincere and strenuous steps to build bridges of understanding with our neighbours for solving our problems through bilateral political dialogue and to promote regional cooperation through regional dialogue and conciliation, and to live in peace together rather than prepare for war separately are being thwarted. The need for peaceful co-existence is not a remote ideal but a dire necessity today.

The misery of the Third World which has been a nefarious legacy of colonialism has been further compounded by the present global economic debt and repayments crisis. We need to realise that the existence of a few rich amongst many poor is a factor of instability and a potential threat to peace and security in the world. We, therefore, stand unequivocally committed to the New International Economic Order.

We in India have admiration for the remarkable economic and industrial achievements that the Socialist Republic of Romania has recorded in the past four decades. During this period our people too,

Excellency, have made progress and transformed an economy from one which used to depend on imports even for elementary items, to one which is substantially self-reliant. Starting from chronic food deficit, India now produces more than enough to feed its 700 millions and even exports foodgrains. Hundreds of millions of our people have been raised above the poverty line. We are determined to narrow the technological gap between us and the most developed countries of the world, and have introduced a series of policy measures to modernise the Indian economy.

In this context we are happy to note, Excellency, that there has been much mutually beneficial cooperation between our two countries. We are confident that this mutually fruitful relationship of trade and industrial cooperation will acquire new dimensions and continue to grow and expand further in the coming years and thus further strengthen and enrich our friendly ties.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen may I invite you now to join me in a toast—to the health of His Excellency the President and Madame Elena Ceauescu,—to the continued progress, prosperity and well being of the people of the Socialist Republic of Romania, and to the further invigoration and enrichment of Indo-Romanian ties of friendship and cooperation.

# **Mass Media**

## Cinema with Quality

THIS IS ANOTHER occasion to honour those representatives of film industry, who have made notable contributions in this field. I congratulate those film personalities, who have won awards for contributions in their respective fields during last year.

It is often said that India is producing more films than any other country. But the number of films is not as important as their quality. The three juries have selected films for national awards. It is an indication that our country can also produce high quality films. We have made multi-dimensional progress in the country including film industry. But a lot is yet to be done. We cannot claim that the standard of our films is very much higher than those of other countries. I do hope that efforts will be made to improve our standards.

I do believe that for several years our film producers have not only developed artistic quality in films, they have also produced films of social importance. As we all know, nearly half of our population consists of women, but our film producers have not been able to pay sufficient attention to the problems of women. It is a matter of regret that in our films women are presented in an undesirable manner. Efforts are made by some people to present nudity to attract more patronage. In our culture women have an honourable place. Instead of presenting them in a flamboyant and lurid manner, their instincts of maternal love, sacrifice and their contribution to national development should be highlighted. It is true that some film producers have dealt with the problems of women, their emancipation, widow remarriage and the evil of dowry and other such subjects but greater attention is needed in this direction.

In the so-called formula films there is too much of violence in them. Unnecessary violence and bloodshed in films is made use of to attract the attention of our younger generation. We need not necessarily follow the western ethos. Our cinema can contribute a great deal in the solution of our difficult problems. It can portray to a greater degree



our progress, national unity and national development. Some producers have no doubt paid attention to the problems of literacy, morality, the situation in slums and wild life. Some producers have also given us films with the messages of our sages and seers, who were born in this country and were dedicated to the service of the people.

Cinema is a powerful medium of social transformation and reform. In my view this is the most powerful medium of mass communication. But there is great shortage of cinema houses in our country. For almost 700 million people, 10 to 12 thousand cinema houses are too insufficient. The number of cinema houses should be much greater to serve not only as a source of entertainment for the masses in every part of the country but should also be medium of education. I do hope that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and film producers and others will pay attention to this.

Today we honour a distinguished personality in the field of cinema, who has used this powerful medium to arouse social consciousness. It is Shri V. Shantaram who can well be described as a leader of Indian film industry. His contributions to cinema have been glorious and long. He has been given Dada Sahib Phalke award for last year. He has earned a great name in the film world in India. He has produced a large number of progressive films, which are as relevant today as they were many years ago.

Hindi is our national language. It is, therefore, natural that maximum films would be in Hindi, but a large number of films in regional languages have also come out in the field. I am glad to know that the best feature film for the last year is in Malayalam. The best film on national integration is also in Malayalam. The best film on social welfare and family welfare is in Marathi. This year a film made in the Bodo language has been given an award which is first film in this language. I am impressed at the good quality of films in regional languages. The regional cinema is being strengthened, which lends strength to the regional languages. Our Cinema is fast becoming a source of preserving our cultural heritage and values. It is powerful medium of our cultural expression.

On the occasion of the distribution of national awards, it is necessary to analyse the progress made so far. It is also important to search for new talent, which will give us direction for the future. The environment of film development in India is vast. There is large diversity and in that diversity lies our unity, which can find valuable expression through the medium of films. The films being given awards

today comprise categories like feature film, non-feature films, documentaries etc. These cover the whole gamut of thoughts and range from realism to fantasy, education to pure entertainment. To write on films is a special art. Awards have been given in this field also, to encourage best writing on films.

The selection of films for national awards is a difficult task. I express appreciation for the members of the Juries who devoted their valuable time for this task, which is also a national service.

I again felicitate and congratulate the award winners, who have made their valuable contributions to Indian cinema. My best wishes for all.

## Free and Fearless

I AM HAPPY to be here today to participate in this function of Malayala Manorama. This newspaper, pioneered journalism in Malayalam and played a significant role in the social, cultural and economic fields. It has helped in shaping the Malayalee ethos. It is now all set to enter upon a new era in its history. The commissioning of the facsimile transmission system and the heat set four colour web offset press will place the Malayala Manorama in the forefront of Indian language newspapers.

The Malayala Manorama already enjoys the distinction of being the largest circulated newspaper in any language in India. I am sure that with this technological innovation, this newspaper will now become one of the best produced in the country.

Right from the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to the present day, newspapers in India have played an active and leading role in raising the consciousness of the people of this great country. They were in the forefront of the freedom movement.

It is a matter of great pride for the journalistic community that leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Balgangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were directly associated with newspapers at one time or the other. Thus was laid the foundation of the free and fearless press in India. Independence brought in its wake new challenges and duties. With the noble mission of bringing the peoples of the world nearer, our newspapers were called upon to be torch bearers in the struggle for world peace, social justice, eradication of poverty and illiteracy.

India today is passing through critical times. Forces of violence, intolerance and communal hatred are raising their ugly heads in various parts of the country. The very unity of the country is being questioned by some misguided groups. It is a time for utmost vigilance, and I am sure our newspapers will rise to the occasion and prove worthy of their historic role in the days to come.

Malayala Manorama has won a reputation of purposeful and responsible journalism. It is with pleasure that I recall the great moment in the career of this newspaper. For close of a hundred years, it has upheld the lofty principles of objective journalism. Its founders laid the solid foundations on which their able successors are continuing to build one of the most forward-looking newspapers in India. It has been following the principles of secularism, communal harmony and social and economic justice. It has been advocating the rights of the depressed classes and the downtrodden.

I am told that the very first issue of the Malayala Manorama nearly a century ago carried an editorial supporting the rights of Harijan for education and social justice. Since then the newspaper has progressed and today is a leading voice of progressive, social, culture and political movements.

I take this occasion to congratulate the Editor Shri K.M. Mathew for the energy and passion with which he is running this newspaper. He is known for a high degree of professionalism. I congratulate all members the staff working in Malayala Manorama and wish them success.

It must be with great pride that those associated with Malayala Manorama recall its past. The courage with which Mr. Mammen Mappillai and the Malayala Manorama defied the Government of the erstwhile princely state of Travancore is well known. They had to pay a heavy price for that defiance. Many of my illustrious predecessors have acknowledged the services rendered by Malayala Manorama to the freedom struggle, unity and integrity of the country.

The Malayala Manorama has every reason to be proud of. It has struggled against heavy odds and has emerged with victory. I feel very happy to know that the paper played a vital role in the removal of illiteracy in the state. History of the past one century lives through its pages providing a link between the past and the present.

I am sure that the Malayala Manorama will continue to grow from strength to strength under the able guidance of its Editor, journalists and management. It will uphold the great traditions by which it was inspired throughout its long and glorious career. I wish the Malayala Manorama and all those associated with it, every success and I declare open the facsimile transmission system and the high-speed heat set four colours web offset press.

## Role of Press in Democracy

I AM HAPPY to be participating in the Durga Ratan Award function for excellence in journalism. The Durga Dass Ratan Devi Trust was founded by late Shri Durga Dass. He served journalism for well over 55 years. He was a man of great dedication and missionary zeal and placed the profession of journalism at the pedestal of worship and devotion. He was a giant among his contemporaries with unbounded enthusiasm and zest for his work. He went on displaying the might of his pen upto the end of his years, and in the process made valuable contributions in the reconstruction of a new democratic India. He was very close to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi and had intimate relations with national leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and Dr. Rajendra Prasad. In addition to being an intrepid journalist, he was a man of tremendous abilities, integrity, sense of judgement and fairplay.

I vividly recall my first meeting with him, accompanied by the then Chief Minister of Punjab, Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon, at his residence in New Delhi. This very first meeting left an indelible impression on my mind of his exceptional personality.

In 1959, after his retirement from Hindustan Times, Shri Durga Dass founded India News and Feature Alliance, popularly known as INFA, to provide small and regional papers journalistic material for publication. He also brought out a Press Year Book, which has proved very useful for the media.

I have had a special place in my heart for journalists. It is, perhaps, due to the fact that once I brought out a small weekly in Faridkot, though soon I had to give it up, as I was not very successful in the venture. But it did arouse feelings of friendship for journalists in my mind as journalism plays a very vigorous role in the life of any vibrant democracy.

Newspapers played a valuable part in our freedom struggle, and after independence, adapted themselves to the need for disseminating

news faithfully and to express their opinion forcefully. Our press has been playing a catalytic role in building public life. Occasions do arise when in difficult situations, political developments, natural calamities and external challenges to defence, the morale of the people tends to go down. In such situations newspapers help build the morale of the people and try to create a healthy atmosphere. In normal circumstances, newspapers draw the attention of Government and the people to such issues and developments as affect the public life in political, economic and social spheres. Our newspapers have played this role admirably, but, unfortunately, in certain circumstances it has been seen that a part of the press has deviated from the high moral values and have tended to support parochial considerations.

Can we really claim that every newspaper in the country has risen above sectarianism and considerations of caste, creed, and regional and lingual affiliations for the upliftment of the country and to promote its unity and integrity?

Most of the newspapers are controlled by big business houses. I do recognise the fact that a majority of journalists and editors have been expressing their views independently, but situations do arise when they have to change their stand at the instance of the management and even otherwise orient their tune owing to other reasons. This does create confusion in public mind about the truth of the matter.

I wonder if a time will come in our country when ordinary people will be able to run their own newspapers. If the common man, ordinary shopkeepers and workers could start their own newspapers, their interests could be better safeguarded. Similarly if women could launch newspapers, theirs and the children's exploitation in the society could be minimised. This requires a great deal of organisation and guidance, which could be provided by dedicated social workers and humanistic individuals. This would reduce the monopoly of newspapers and enhance public interest.

As you all know, for sometime past, our newspapers and magazines have been playing a more active role, though it is true that some of them have been too effusive leading to piquant situations. If things are not unnecessarily magnified and are depicted on the basis of reality, it would be more beneficial to the society.

In a democratic set up, press is as important as Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. Without press, a democracy would be lifeless and meaningless. In the morning, every educated man in the country prefers to have a look at a newspaper than even to worship his

diety. If he does not get a newspaper, or receives it late, he loses his composure. He makes his opinion on the basis of the newspaper reports. Such is the power of the press in the modern times.

For the last few months, newspapers in the country have been making special comments on our Constitution. I do not want to go into details, but I am happy to note that most of them have made fair comments, which would go a long way infusing greater strength in our democratic system.

I am glad that people of long experience and high achievements in journalism are recipients of the awards today. Two of them viz. Dr. D.K. Rangnekar and Shri Ramesh Chandra, unfortunately, are no more. Those receiving awards in person include great names like Shri Nikhil Chakravarty, Shri Arun Shorie, Shri K.K. Dua and 'Insight Team' of the Statesman. Others receiving these awards include Shri Kirtinath Hazarika, Cartoonist Shri Ranga, Journalists Km. Neerja Chowdhury and Shri Pramod Pushkarna. I heartily congratulate all of them and wish them continued success in their pursuits. The tree planted by Shri Durga Dass is being carefully nurtured by his eldest son Shri Inderjit, whom I have known for the last two decades. His dedicated work and healthy and constructive attitude towards journalism has been helping in maintaining the high traditions of journalism. I have had the occasion of reading his weekly column, which is marked by fair analysis of important developments. I am pleased to know that two of his daughters have taken to the profession of journalism and to carry forward the tradition set by their grandfather and father.

Since I am demitting the office of the President in another week, I would like to tell my journalist friends that it would be difficult for me to forget their role. I do hope that they would carry on the torch of truth and justice and would help building the morale of our citizens in any challenges they might have to face in the future. We have to place the interests of the country and the nation above everything else. We will have to bend all our energies to strengthening the institutions working in the interest of the nation. The times of personality cults are over. We have to tend to our democratic system and public welfare. The role of the press in this task is crucial and it can never be minimised. Instead of individuals we shall have to respect the values. Instead of groups, we shall have to look after the interests and success of the nation.

I again take this opportunity to express my pleasure to have got an

opportunity to address my journalist friends. I felicitate the Chairman of the Durga Dass Ratan Devi Trust, Shri Dharam Vira and trustees S/Shri Nani Palkhiwala, Shri Inderjit and Dr. Ram S. Tarneja. Once again I express my hope that the newspapers of our country would do their best to enhance the glory of the Nation.



# **Tributes**

## An Able Administrator

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to unveil the statue of one of the great sons of modern India and popular leader of Kerala Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai. Late Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai will ever be remembered as a leading freedom fighter and nation builder. The people of Kerala can be legitimately proud of the achievements of Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai in organising the people of former Travancore—Cochin States to participate in the national movement and later in consolidating the basis of Kerala State as its Chief Minister. Later I had the opportunity of knowing him from close when he became the Governor of Punjab. It is a matter of special privilege to me that I am unveiling the statue of this great patriot, social worker, renowned politician and an able administrator. I hope this will provide inspirations to the coming generations to dedicate themselves to the service and development of the country.

We can render true homage to any leader only by following the path shown by him. Therefore, I am sure this statue will always remind the people of Kerala of their duty towards ensuring the nation's unity and integrity and specially the economic progress of Kerala; and that they will continue to endeavour for the fulfillment of the dreams of Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai.

I am told that Pattom Thanu Pillai Trust has chalked out a long programme of various activities in the field of education, health, welfare of the poor etc. to perpetuate his memory. I am glad that the Government of Kerala has allotted sufficient land free of cost for constructing a memorial building where centres will be established for the development of culture; education and research.

Kerala is inhabited by people belonging to all religions who have contributed immensely towards the freedom of the country and its reconstruction. I hope the activities of the Trust will be beneficial for all sections of the people. It often happens that if the programme is

inordinately large it is somewhat difficult to fulfill it on account of financial limitations. Therefore, whatever plans you make, you should set its priorities in the first instance. The success of one good project gives encouragement and strength to start others. I hope the Government and the people of Kerala will provide adequate help and cooperation to the Trust in achieving its goals.

I wish all the workers of the Trust and those associated with it every success in their endeavour.

## A Star in the Horizon

I AM VERY happy to be associated with the unveiling of the statue of one of the foremost national leaders of India, Subhash Chandra Bose. I congratulate the Government of Kerala, Trivandrum City Corporation and the Kerala Ex-Indian National Army Association for the national spirit which has inspired them to establish this statue.

In the history of every country there are a few personalities whose very name gives a feeling of pride and honour. In our country there have been several such personalities who have made their mark not only in India but in the whole world. It is for this reason that our culture is held in esteem throughout the universe. The great saints and thinkers of India have given much to the world which is showing the right path to all of us even today. In the modern India Mahatma Gandhi has given much to the world polity a new message of peace and non-violence which has not only helped India in attaining independence but also inspired the people of Asia, Africa and other countries to free themselves from colonialism. Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi came certain dynamic persons who played an important role in arousing national sentiments and in bringing independence near. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose is one of those personalities who will always shine like stars in the horizon of India.

Netaji was a brilliant student from the very beginning imbued with deep revolutionary feelings. He was sent to England to enter I.C.S. but he was a worshipper of freedom. Under the influence of the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi he spurned the attractive career of I.C.S. and plunged himself in the freedom struggle. He was repeatedly imprisoned and even confined in Burma for two years. He became the Congress President. With Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru he raised the demand for total independence. He offered to the people of the country, "You give me blood I will give you freedom". He established the Forward Bloc to accelerate the freedom movement.

His revolutionary sentiments got a new awakening on the opening of the second World War. In spite of being under house arrest he

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Speech while unveiling the statue of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose at Trivandrum.  
February 7, 1985

arranged to sneak out to Germany where he met the leaders of that country and canvassed for the freedom of India. The magnitude of his indomitable courage and dedication to freedom can be assessed from the facts that in spite of the grave hazards and impediments, he reached Singapore in 1943 and established there Indian National Army.

The formation of the I.N.A. will remain a golden chapter in the History of India. It was the I.N.A. which shook the foundations of the British rule and infused new life in the struggle for freedom which was being waged in India under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The coming generation will feel proud to read the daring exploits of the dynamic Netaji in firing the Indian Army with the spirit of nationalism to prepare them to challenge the British. The new direction which Netaji gave at a crucial juncture of our freedom struggle will continue to inspire our coming generations.

It is a matter of still greater pride for the people of Kerala that more than half of the civilian recruits who joined the I.N.A. were from Kerala, who gave up their lucrative professions and businesses to join the National Movement. Many of them laid their lives in the battlefield and still many more died in the jungles of Burma due to lack of food and medicines. The sacrifices made by Netaji and his valliant I.N.A are in the best tradition of valour available in the world of history.

It gives me great happiness to learn that there are more than two thousand former I.N.A. members present in Kerala even today and most of whom belong to Trivandrum. It is in the fitness of things that these patriots have decided to establish this statue to perpetuate the memory of the great son of India, Subhash Chandra Bose. So long as the tricolour continues to fly from the ramparts of Red Fort in Delhi, the country will continue to remember these brave men whom Netaji shaped as the first Indian Army to fight for the freedom of the country. The sacrifices of Netaji and his brave soldiers amongst whom the next to Netaji was General Mohan Singh, who is still alive; and as are also some others, will serve as beckon lights for the future generations. Our true homage to Netaji would be to work with dedication to make the country for whose sake Netaji sacrificed his everything, so strong, prosperous and progressive that it may one day become a great power in the world.

With these words I offer my homage to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and wish you every success in your endeavours.

## A Memorable Historian

I HAVE COME here today to pay homage to the freedom fighters who were imprisoned here since the first war of independence in 1857. This is my pilgrimage to this most sacred place of worship for all Indians. The names of all those imprisoned here after 1857 are not known, yet a few names like Alama Haq Khairabad and Maulana Liaquat Ali of 1857 fame, will remain in our memory for ever as they died in these islands as prisoners.

Similarly a large number of prisoners used to be imprisoned here, wave after wave, after every revolt against the colonial rule in India, like the Alipore Bomb case of 1908, Moplah Rebellion between 1920-23 and a host of others. However, we should always remember the names of famous freedom fighters imprisoned here like Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, his brother Ganesh Savarkar, Vaman Joshi, Shambhu Nath Azad, Jay Dev Kapur, Sujan Singh Ahluwalia, Batukeshwar Datta, Sachindra Nath Sanyal, Bhai Parmanand, Barindra Kumar Ghose, Lok Nathpal, Ullaskar Datta, Ganesh Chandra Ghose, Trailokya Maharaj, Baba Vasokha Singh and Prithvi Singh Azad. This does not exhaust the entire list of freedom fighters incarcerated here.

I have come here today as a pilgrim to worship this land which has sheltered countless number of our brave freedom fighters. I can well imagine their condition under many privations, as I myself suffered five years of incarceration in a solitary cell in Faridkot during the freedom struggle.

They sacrificed themselves, in order to pave the way for independence, which we are enjoying now. Their ardent patriotism and spirit of self-less sacrifice should inspire all of us, especially the younger generation. Many of them who are still with us have organised themselves into a fraternity and, what is more, have contributed their mite for the construction of this memorial. This is an exemplary way of self-less sacrifice. I am told, that the name

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Speech while dedicating the freedom fighters memorial to the nation. Port Blair, Andaman, February 23, 1985

Andamans is a derivative of Lord Hanuman, who is worshipped by millions for the great qualities in him like self-discipline, self-less sacrifice, integrity, strength of character and complete devotion to the cause. This long tradition of sacrifice should inspire us all.

I feel that a comprehensive history consisting of the biographies of all those political leaders imprisoned here should be prepared for the benefit of our younger generation. This should not be difficult as the details must be available in the jail records. It is worthwhile for the Administration of the Union Territory to motivate historian for undertaking an enduring project like this.

I consider it a rare privilege for me as a freedom fighter to get this opportunity of dedicating this memorial to the nation.

## Endeavours for Progress and Plenty

I AM VERY happy to be here today and meet you all. Car Nicobar has made remarkable progress in recent decades and I congratulate you all for the hard work and spirit of cooperation. You are all children of nature, peace loving and law abiding and living simple lives. I am impressed by the rapid strides made by the cooperative movement in your island, Where I am told that each village has cooperatives making steady progress. What is more impressive is the turn-over of more than five crores of rupees in the year 1982-83 by the two apex cooperative societies. This is a unique achievement for a population of only 22,000 which speaks eloquently of the efficiency and integrity of the members. I am told that the island has made tremendous progress in the field of education and health also under the Tribal Sub-Plan. I have no doubt that the Government will do all to safeguard your interests and continue to extend help and assistance to meet your urges and aspirations.

My speech will not be complete without a mention of the Architect of Modern Nicobar, who has devoted his whole life for the development of the people and the island. Born and brought up here, Bishop Richardson left a glorious tradition of struggle and self-less sacrifice. His life and achievements should inspire all of us. I pay my respectful homage to his memory.

I am aware of the problems you are facing and your aspirations. I assure you that the Government will accord high priority to meet your demands. I am happy to say that one of your long-standing desires to have a T.V. Relay Station will be fulfilled before long. I hope that the Relay Station will add to your knowledge and welfare.

I thank you all for the warm reception extended to me. I wish you all success in your endeavours for progress and plenty.

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*Speech at a public meeting and laying of wreath on the Tomb of Bishop Richardson at Car Nicobar February 24, 1985*



## Indian Jews—A Tribute

IT GIVES ME pleasure to be here today and to inaugurate the centenary celebrations of the Keneseth Eliyahoo Synagogue. This is a fitting occasion to celebrate the centenary of this place of worship and recall the many-sided contributions made by the Jewish community in India over the past many centuries. The services of the Sasson family to the building of this Synagogue and to the development of this metropolis deserve a special mention. Some of the pioneers of India's earliest industrialisation, especially Shri David Sasson in the preceding century belong to Jewish community.

India is a unique land which has always extended a warm welcome to people belonging to many faiths and provided hospitality to one and all. This is because India's ancient tradition is based on tolerance and search for truth. It is this supreme and eternal endeavour of humanity that has guided the spiritual efforts of people in India since the dawn of history. The unity of godhead and ultimate reality of truth have enabled this land to become a unique one. This is the essence of teaching of our great sages, *gurus*, *acharyas*, *avatars* and *saints* which runs like a unifying thread keeping various forces together. In recent times, Gandhiji shaped our freedom struggle based on these eternal values. Unity in diversity is an integral part of nature itself and humanity as well, though expressed through different tongues. The spirit of Ten Commandments of Moses represents the essence of teachings of all faiths. Our policy of secularism is based on ancient tradition and eternal values and not on expediency. I feel that it is a matter of pride for us that all great faiths of the world are respected in our country. I am sure that these celebrations will inspire our people, especially the younger generation, to know more about the Jewish faith and the jews in India.

It is a well known fact that jews are one of the earliest to come and settle in India, especially along with West Coast like Cochin, Konkan, and Bombay. Perhaps, among the jewish groups settled here, the jews of Cochin are the earliest who were welcomed open heartedly by the

then rulers with a rare spirit of warm cordiality. There are many Synagogues standing today in many parts of our country as shining examples of toleration and peaceful co-existence. In this context, I feel tempted to quote our beloved leader and late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi who said 'while speaking at Cochin Synagogue in 1968:

"The Jewish Community of India has rendered and continued to render notable service in many fields. It has contributed men of distinction to business and industry, to the civil services and the armed forces and to the world of scholarship".

The presence of jews in India since ancient times has enriched India's heritage and contributed immensely to our composite culture. Many tributaries have joined together to make this mighty mainstream of our culture. It is necessary to see that the tributaries as well as the mainstream go on strengthening and sustaining each other so that society moves forward with renewed confidence and strength. Neglect of one or the other will be detrimental to both and may well threaten our very existence. This is a lesson of history which we the present generation should not forget.

With these few words, I conclude by declaring the centenary celebrations of the Keneseth Eliyahoo Synagogue open.

## A Remarkable Figure

I FEEL VERY happy to be here and to associate myself with this function. This place is of great historical importance as it was here that Chhatrapati Shivaji was coronated on June 16, 1674, more than three hundred years back.

Chhatrapati Shivaji stands out as a remarkable figure in the history of India for more than one reason. He was a leader of extraordinary genius and vision, Who struck out a new path to freedom and to self-respect. He inspired a disunited and demoralised people to unite into a one homogeneous political unit to fight against repression. What was of great significance in him was that throughout his life he breathed a spirit of toleration and humanity. In this context, it would be well to recall what Chhatrapati Shivaji said in a letter to Emperor Aurangzeb:

“Islam and Hinduism are both beautiful manifestations of the divine spirit. Any one bearing fanaticism and religious hatred must be said to be acting against the command of God”.

Thus Chhatrapati Shivaji has revived the true spirit of *sanatana dharma* and become a fore-runner of our present day concept of secularism. The state established by him was informed by a spirit of universal *dharma*. All faiths were free to practise their creed and no one was discriminated against on grounds of religion. We must remember that some of his close associates and aides were of Muslim faith. Chhatrapati Shivaji was an ideal ruler in whose kingdom protection to women was assured and pious men of all religions were treated with great respect and royal patronage.

Chhatrapati Shivaji's daring military skill and spirit of chivalry, his organisational ability and management of men and material and above all his consideration for the weaker sections of population should be remembered by all of us. Let us take a pledge to emulate him and follow his teachings from this very place where he was crowned as a sovereign head. India has achieved its full status and stature as an independent sovereign country after centuries of struggle. This hard

won freedom and unity should be protected and preserved at all costs. This is the supreme goal before us and the spirit of leaders like Chhatrapati Shivaji should inspire us all.

I thank the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Vasant Rao Patil for inviting me here.

## Work is Worship

I FEEL IMMENSELY happy to be amidst you all and to inaugurate the All India Basawa Tatwa Conference today. I agreed to come here when Shri Jatti, our illustrious former Vice President invited me, as Sri Basaweswara was a renowned spiritual leader of twelfth century. He was not only a spiritual leader of great repute but was a farsighted statesman and administrator.

India's rich cultural heritage and spiritual legacy is a thrilling story. It was a mighty stream enriched by many saints, *avatars*, sages and *gurus* over the many centuries in the past and belonging to all parts of our vast country. It was they who weaved the fabric of Indian culture out of many threads which is unique in the history of humanity. A distinguishing feature of our composite culture is that its foundation was laid by spiritual leaders and men of thought, rather than by political leaders. Perhaps that is the reason why our cultural unity has endured long and withstood many upheavals over the many centuries in the past. The great Basaweswara, born in the twelfth century in Karnataka, was one such great spiritual leader who helped in shaping the destinies of the people. His message of equality and his ideal of work as worship at a time of great social confusion in those far-off days have helped in electrifying the people with a new vision, a fresh energy and a noble ideal. His exemplary life of work and worship has provided a synthesis that helped to maintain an equilibrium in social life, in the midst of many contending and contesting social groups. His simple message based on values like love, compassion, selfless service has answered many challenges of the day posed by orthodoxy and rigid rituals. Basawa preached that there is no need to escape from daily and worldly responsibilities for salvation; which can be attained through a combination of work and worship. He has no use with abstract and unending dialectics. For him God is real, the world is a challenge and the goal of life is to live in communion with the divine through harmony in life. Thus what Basawa tried was to strike a

balance between external pulls and internal urges of man and realise unity of Godhead. Basawa's philosophy is in total agreement with the teachings of great spiritual leaders like the Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus, Mohammad and Guru Nanak.

The greatness and uniqueness of Basawa's life consist in the fact that he was a great social reformer endowed with vision and foresight. Being a practising administrator as Chief Minister of King Bijjala, Basawa proved himself a worthy philosopher-king, by implementing the values preached by him. He believed in absolute equality and advocated it passionately. Inequality in any form is a great enemy of spiritualism. Basawa's teachings are more relevant today in the modern world with ever increasing tensions and conflicts. In Basawa, we have a model-statesman, administrator, religious and social reformer, scholar and a mystic. I wish that all our people especially political leaders should emulate him. This great twelfth century philosopher-statesman has left his imprint on all aspects of life by teaching the art of right living, evolving a synthesis out of fundamentals of all faiths and demonstrating the validity of intrinsic harmony and unity in diversity. Basawa's emphasis on universal love and right conduct as essential steps for attaining happiness in this world, eight centuries ago, singles him out as an outstanding religious and social reformer.

It is a matter of great pleasure for me to know that Shri Jatti is rendering great services to the cause of spreading the message of Basawa. In him we see the spirit of Basawa fully alive and active.

With these few words, I thank Shri B.D. Jatti for inviting me here and giving this opportunity to associate myself with this function. I wish your conference all success.

## Freedom Fighter's City

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today in this historic city and to lay the foundation stone for the Freedom Fighters Bhavan, I consider this as a unique opportunity to pay my tribute to all freedom fighters of Andhra Pradesh, who distinguished themselves in the freedom struggle of India. Names of great freedom fighters from Andhra Pradesh like Shri. K.Nageswara Rao, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Shri T.Prakasam will always remain in the minds of the people. Many of the freedom fighters from Andhra Pradesh have played a very distinguished role in our country's public life both before and after independence. We have with us Professor N.G. Ranga here who is the doyen of freedom fighters. My distinguished predecessor Shri Neelam Sanjiva Reddy belongs to your State who has adorned many important posts after independence.

Vijayawada has produced great freedom fighters like Shri Kaleswara Rao and Shri M. Chitti (alias Appalaswamy). This is a fitting occasion to recall that great patriot Shri Pingali Venkayya who designed our tri-colour national flag which was adopted by the Congress in its session held here in 1921. There were many from Andhra Pradesh like Bhayankarachari who were imprisoned in the cellular jail in Andaman Islands. This does not exhaust the entire list of freedom fighters of Andhra Pradesh, which runs into thousands. I salute all of them.

I have come here as a pilgrim. I have worshipped Kanaka, Durga and prayed for the welfare of all people. As you all know Mother Durga removes all difficulties of her devotees and helps in achieving victory over evil. Today I pay respects to the freedom fighters of Andhra Pradesh, who underwent many privations during the freedom struggle. I can well imagine their sufferings as I myself suffered five years of incarceration in a solitary cell in Faridkot during the freedom struggle. They have sacrificed themselves in order to pave the way for independence, the fruits of which we are enjoying now. The ardent

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Speech while laying the foundation stone of Freedom Fighters Bhawan and on the occasion of the AP Freedom Fighters Conference, Vijayawada March, 10, 1986

patriotism and spirit of sacrifice should inspire all of us especially the younger generation.

I am glad to know that the Krishna District Freedom Fighters Association has published a book in Telugu listing out all the freedom fighters from the district. I feel that a more comprehensive book covering all the freedom fighters from the State should be published by the Freedom Fighters Association before long. I know that there are many difficulties to be overcome the chief one being financial. I hope the State Government will do all its best in publishing such a book. All school-going children and students in colleges should be enabled to know the sacrifices made by their elders for achieving freedom for the motherland. There are not many books in our languages about the long-drawn out freedom struggle. This is a gap which we cannot allow to exist in our educational system. This need has been recognised and I am happy to note that constructive steps are being contemplated now to fill the gap and equip the children with the history of our freedom struggle.

Before concluding, I thank the Freedom Fighters Association for inviting me here and giving me an opportunity to meet all of you.



## A Lamp of Wisdom

I AM VERY happy to be here today and to associate myself with the 500th birth anniversary of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. When I was invited for the function I accepted the invitation with great pleasure because I have the highest regard for Indian saints and sages.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu through his spiritual preachings created an environment of spiritual consciousness wherever he went. He visited many parts of India during his religious sojourn. Fifteenth century was a dark period in the spiritual history of the nation. The people of India were lost amidst rigidities, caste and social unrest. The occasion demanded new spiritual leaders to show a way out from this chaos. The Bhakti Movement which developed in those turbulent centuries, during the 14th to 16th, was the culmination which paved way for cultural renaissance of India.

All the spiritual leaders of the Bhakti movement of that period had one unifying message that God is one. They spread it through selfless service, love and brotherhood. They lit the lamp of wisdom. They emphasised that all faiths and beliefs if sincerely and truly followed with honesty and dedication, will lead to the same goal of self-realisation without which unity of Godhead cannot be visualised. This also was the message of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who helped the spiritual regeneration started by Namdeo in Maharashtra, Kabir and Ravi Das in Banaras, Guru Nanak Devji and Sheikh Farid in Punjab. Through the teachings of all these great sages runs the common message of love and brotherhood. In fact, all these sages do not belong to any one region and nor was their message meant only for any single community. They belonged to mankind as a whole. Their teachings are for eternity, transcending all limitations of the visual universe.

Like Guru Nanak Devji, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu also travelled all over the country and demonstrated that the thread of unity runs through all religious faiths.

From this, traditions based on tolerance, compassion, truth and service have begun to shape a secular outlook—respect for all religions—which is enshrined in our Constitution. Sectarianism, parochialism and narrow communalism have no place in our system of democracy and secularism. Our ancestors left a great treasure of eternal values. The essence of teachings by our *rishis*, *munis*, *gurus* and *acharyas* are very relevant to India today because of the challenges our young nation is facing from fissiparous and divisive tendencies. While remembering the sages the best tribute we can pay to them is to rededicate ourselves to follow their teachings. It is essential that these anniversary celebrations should not be mere ritualistic gatherings but occasions for self-examination and re-dedication.

We in India are very fortunate. In the recent past, great spiritual leaders like Rama Krishna Paramahansa, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Shirdi Sai Baba and Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi left their foot-prints which gave birth to messengers and reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda. Their teachings shaped our freedom struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and found place in our Constitution. It was their spiritual teachings which inspired great patriots like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

A time has come now for us to revive that spirit and live up to the values of truth, tolerance, compassion and service, instead of merely repeating them like a tape recorder. It is highly necessary for the leaders and public figures to adhere to these values and follow this path because people look to the leaders first. Practice is more important than theory. It becomes perfect only if it is followed in day-to-day life. If we elders do not follow them by leading exemplary lives, how can we ask the youth and future generation to follow them.

Indian polity is coming under pressure from various directions and it is our paramount duty to defend our hard-earned freedom, unity and integrity of the country. This is the only way for us to pay tributes to our ancestors and I hope that celebrations like this will increasingly help in creating an awareness among the people.

## A Man of Vision

**I** AM GLAD to be here today and to associate myself with the Founder's Day of this great educational institution.

Claude Martin was a man of wisdom and vision. He came to our country at the age of 17 as an ordinary soldier of a foreign army. He amassed considerable wealth, but instead of taking it all away, he earmarked a major portion of it, for the noble cause of education. This day is of special significance, as the La Martiniere Institutions are celebrating their 150th anniversary.

Though Claude Martin was a French man by birth, he developed love and devotion for the country of his adoption. He preferred to stay on in India for the rest of his life. By establishing the schools at Calcutta and Lucknow, he became a part of this country's milieu. It was people like him, who gave a fillip to modern education in India. The institutions being run in his name will remain a monument to his penchant for education and to the human good.

The objective of education in our country cannot be only to impart bookish knowledge. Nor can it be to create contingents of seekers of white collared jobs. Our educational system has to be geared up to provide training in vocations to enable our young men and women to be useful citizens and to make constructive contributions. The ultimate goal of education has to be to make our children composite human beings with a balanced personality. They must be able to acquire power to comprehend problems and to find practical solutions. Our education cannot be such as to lay emphasis out of proportion on materialistic outlook. It must preserve our rich traditions of truth, universal peace and prosperity for all. Our heritage is full of spirit of tolerance and brotherhood.

Education in India has to be a powerful instrument of promoting national dignity and pride in the bigger framework of a global family. Our education must inculcate in our children a sense of self-respect, self-reliance and an overwhelming desire for achieving excellence. A

spirit of healthy competition has to be generated in the class-rooms, on play-grounds and later in life in all spheres-intellectual, social and spiritual.

People like Claude Martin left a rich legacy. His motto was, work hard constantly. It is only by consistent endeavour that a man marches towards success. Half-hearted measures cannot lead him to the doors of accomplishment. The real quest for knowledge never ends in a school or a college. It becomes a part of one's nature and becomes intense on the journey of life for achieving perfection and reaching loftier goals.

In some parts of our country, one hears of discontent and restlessness among younger people. I consider these as symptoms of a bigger malady that afflicts the present day society. I have deep faith in the capabilities of our younger generation. They can excel in qualities and intelligence their counterparts in any part of the world. They have tremendous potential, capacity and courage. It requires proper conditions to be created for their healthy and balanced growth. Though the older generation is by and large conscious of the role of younger people as custodians of our future, unsavoury situations are sometimes created to vitiate the atmosphere. It is incumbent on all of us to keep the educational institutions free of narrow concepts of caste, creed or religion. Unless we keep our schools and colleges unpolluted of party politics, we cannot expect our younger generation to develop high character to face future challenges. The unnecessary impediments in the healthy growth of our children must be avoided.

Education figures show that in 1981, our literacy rate has increased to 36.23 per cent. There are still about 64 per cent of our population needing elementary education. It is a stupendous task, which can be achieved only by the combined efforts of Government and social and voluntary organisations. We must take care that with the increasing population, we should not add to the numbers of illiterates in absolute terms. The new education policy of the Government aims at increasing literacy rate.

In the sphere of education, greater attention is needed for the poorer and vulnerable sections of the society. They have to be helped and encouraged, because they have suffered for long.

In our democratic set up, students too have a measure of responsibility. They have to understand that if they have to be healthy and strong, and if they have to compete with the rest of the world, then there is no point in wasting energies in unproductive activities.

Boycotts, strikes and disruption do not increase knowledge or produce wealth. These dissipate strength and reduce potential.

While we pay homage to Claude Martin for his noble example of serving the cause of education, we should also remember our seers, sages and teachers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekanand, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Gurudev Tagore, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and others who held the cause of education so dear to their hearts. My best wishes to you all!

## A National Hero

**I** AM GLAD to be associated with the inaugural function of the seminar on Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia as a national and secular hero.

Baba Jassa Singh was born on the 3rd May, 1718 in Ahlu Village near Lahore. He was hardly 5 years, when his father Sardar Badar Singh breathed his last. His mother took him for blessings to Mata Sundriji, the widow of Guru Gobind Singhji, who was then residing in Delhi. Mata Sundriji looked after the child for 7 years and brought him up as her own progeny. The young Jassa Singh started receiving training in weapons and also learning Persian and Arabic. He also took tuition in music and being gifted with a melodious voice and soon started reciting the sacred hymns from the Holy Scripture. After 7 years of stay with Mata Sundriji, the maternal uncle of Baba Jassa Singh, Sardar Bagh Singh took him to Punjab. At the time of farewell Mata Sundriji blessed the youngman predicting that he would attain greatness in the years to come and would attain regal glory. Baba Jassa Singh was adopted by Nawab Kapur Singh as his son and gave him systematic training in warfare strategy and prepared him for the leadership. On the death of Nawab Kapur Singh in 1753, Baba Jassa Singh became the leader of the Sikh Community on his conquering Lahore in 1761. He was given the title of 'Badshah' and 'Sultan-ul-Qaum'. Babaji remained at the helm of affairs of the Sikh community till 1783, when his journey of this world came to an end.

Baba Jassa Singh was an ardent follower of the Sikh faith. He was pious in temperament and had great compassion for the poor, the needy and the oppressed. He always bore all trials and turbulence with courage and perseverance. He opposed the tyranny of aggressive forces and led many expeditions against the foreign hordes. The repeated attacks by Ahmed Shah Abdali had created terror among the people. The Sikh soldiers under the inspiring leadership of Baba Jassa Singh fought against the sinister designs of the invaders. In 1761 after defeating the Marathas in the Third Battle of Panipat, Ahmed Shah

Abdali turned his wrath on the sikhs. The same year the sikhs after rescuing Lahore struck coins and proclaimed their sovereignty.

In February 1762, the forces of Abdali beseiged the sikh forces near Malerkotla. With his military strategy and strong determination, Baba Jassa Singh engaged the Abdali forces and was able to rescue a large number of troops, women and children from his clutches. In this combat, known as great holocaust (Vadda Ghalughara) about 20,000 sikhs became martyrs.

On the 9th April, 1762, Ahmed Shah Abdali attacked Harimandir Saheb and razed it to the ground. But under the defiant leadership of Baba Jassa Singh, the sikh forces ousted the aggressor and restored the sanctity of the Golden Temple. The sikhs conquered Sirhind and Lahore for the second time.

Steeped in high principles, as Baba Jassa Singh was, never did the sikh soldiers commit any excesses on the women and the children of the enemy. They also never attacked a fleeing adversary. They always tried to save the life and honour of the women and children without consideration of religion, caste or creed. In April, 1761, Baba Jassa Singh rescued with great sacrifices 2,200 women and children being forcibly taken away by Ahmed Shah Abdali. He then restored these women and children to their homes.

Baba ji was a devout follower of the principles and traditions of his faith. He also protected the cow and led expeditions against the butchers in Lahore. By his just and compassionate behaviour he earned the epithet of a liberator.

Babaji was a great patriot. The East India Company authorities in Calcutta were convinced that as long as Dal Khalsa led by Baba Jassa Singh existed, it was not possible to conquer Punjab and it was also extremely difficult to cast an evil eye on this part of India.

Baba Jassa Singh was a great organiser and he united the Sikh *misals*. Even though he struck coins, but these were in the name of Sikh Gurus. This prepared a ground for the establishment of a Khalsa Raj in Punjab by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Under Babaji's command people of all religions and faiths unitedly fought against foreign invaders. It was because of the spirit kindled by great generals like Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia that invaders like Ahmed Shah could not entrench themselves on the Indian side.

Baba Jassa Singh was a secular hero, as he gave equal respect to all religions. The muslims had complete freedom to profess their faith and to follow their traditions. In administration, Hindus, Sikhs and

Muslims were all given their share according to merit without any prejudice of faith or religion. There was no discrimination on the basis of religion.

Baba Jassa Singh was in a real sense a saint soldier. He baptised many sikhs, which included Baba Ala Singh, the founder of Patiala Durbar.

The name of Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia commands respect and reverence. He is remembered for his bravery, courage, sense of justice, piety, humility, strong determination, renunciation and sacrifice. He was not only a great sikh, but a great Indian and a great human being. His life was a saga of sacrifices for saving the honour and culture of India. His actions and achievements will serve as beacon light for many millenia.

One thing is certain that though the concept of secularism as such did not exist during those times, the very conduct of catholic, just and compassionate leaders like Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia established ethos of respect for all communities on the basis of humanity and universal brotherhood. These are the ideals which modern India cherishes and follows as an act of faith.



## A Great Pioneer

I AM GLAD to participate in the celebrations of Masi-ul Mulk Hakim Ajmal Khan Day. Whenever one thinks of national struggle for freedom, one remembers with respect a person like Hakim Ajmal Khan, who was one of the great leaders of this country, who led the struggle against foreign domination. Hakim Ajmal Khan was a man of great stature, whose name will remain immortal in our history of freedom struggle alongwith stalwarts like Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Moti Lal Nehru, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishan Gokhale, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and others.

Hakim Ajmal Khan was not only a soldier in the national cause, he was also a celebrated Hakim of his time with a great healing power. He was wealthy and affluent, but he renounced comforts and a grand manner of living, in order to join hands with Mahatma Gandhi to liberate the country from foreign rule. He presided over the session of the Indian National Congress at Ahmedabad in 1921.

Hakim Saheb was one of those, who refused to be browbeaten by the British rulers and joined the national movement. He defied the British Viceroy and worked whole heartedly for the national cause, and in the process, suffered heavy financial losses and privations. He himself donated money to the Congress for the national activities. He was very close to Pt. Moti Lal Nehru, and as mentioned by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in his autobiography, his father and Hakim Ajmal Khan used to have very long meetings discussing the affairs of the Congress and formulating strategy for achieving the goal of freedom. They had such mutual regard that they used to address each other as *Bhai Saheb*.

Hakim Saheb was a symbol of communal harmony and national unity. He was a true nationalist and spared no effort in emphasising the secular cause of attaining freedom and living in the spirit of harmony, goodwill and brotherhood. Mahatma Gandhi held Hakim

Saheb in high esteem. He always valued the views of Hakim Saheb and listened to him with great respect. At the time of the demise of Hakim Saheb in 1927, his death was mourned throughout the country. Great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya, Smt. Sarojini Naidu, Sardar Patel, Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant and others attended the funeral in Delhi. An estimated 5 lakh people attended the funeral of this great son of India.

One of the lasting contributions of Hakim Ajmal Khan is the Tibbia College in New Delhi, which was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi. He also set up a Unani Dispensary. These are the lasting monuments to the life of this great freedom fighter and pioneer in the Unani System of medicine. Alongwith Ayurvedic system, Unani System is popular in the country, as it is comparatively cheap and more efficacious.

I must felicitate Shri Naseemuddin Khan, who is known as Piare Miyan, one of the descendants of Hakim Ajmal Khan, who has organised this function.

It is most essential to remember the works and sacrifices made by our leaders, who symbolised the spirit of selfless service to the country and promoted the spirit of love and harmony. There is need for such leaders even today, when the country is passing through a difficult phase. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose and Hakim Ajmal Khan had a great vision of India, free from foreign rule, rid of want, poverty, strife and exploitation. It was their dream to build a free and prosperous India, where people of all religions and faiths would live in a spirit of tolerance and where disparities would be reduced; where everybody would be able to live with dignity and honour. But it is a matter of regret that narrow and sectarian interests have taken the better of national and secular elements and a lot of loss of life and property has been occurring in some parts of the country. We must draw inspiration and learn a lesson from the lives of eminent national leaders like Hakim Ajmal Khan, who were great in the real sense of the word. I feel, it is necessary that booklets on the lives of our national leaders like Hakim Ajmal Khan should be published in all languages of India, so that people in every State and region should remember the examples set by them in the freedom movement and human love and equality.

## A Patriot and Prophet

I AM HAPPY to be here and to inaugurate this important Seminar—"1986—The International Year of Peace: Sri Aurobindo's Vision of Human Unity". I am glad that Shri Vasant Sathe is here to participate and contribute his ideas. You have here a galaxy of eminent thinkers and students of Sri Aurobindo, who can give positive and constructive suggestions in furthering the cause of International Peace and World Unity, as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo.

Sri Aurobindo's contribution to the freedom struggle stands unique in the history of our freedom movement. He was great patriot and a prophet of Indian nationalism, who sacrificed his position and power at the altar of the motherland for her liberation from the foreign yoke. His speeches and writings inspired his countrymen to dedicate themselves for the noble mission of achieving liberty. He won the respect of the the trio - Lala Lajpatrai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal - who were the great leaders in their own right, and gave a spiritual dimension to the freedom movement. For him, India is not merely a geographical entity but Mother India. By the sacrifices of eminent leaders and lakhs of common people, India won its independence. The significance of our country was described by Sri Aurobindo, "India is the living energy of a great spiritual conception, and fidelity to it is the very principle of her existence. For by it's virtue above, she has been one of the immortal nations. This alone has been the secret of the amazing persistence and perpetual force of survival. It is left for Asia and specially for India to reconstruct the World." Keeping these noble ideals in our mind, we have to play our humble role in the service of humanity.

At the present juncture of history, humanity has been facing the major crisis of its existence. It is stated that more than 60,000 nuclear warheads have been stock-piled by a few countries, and they have the potential to destroy the entire globe 27 times. There will be no victors or vanquished, but it will end up in annihilation of the human species

and other living beings from the mother earth. Even though the world spends one trillion dollars per year on armaments, not even a fraction of it for elimination of hunger and disease is being spared. This is the world with the distorted sense of priorities.

As a sequel to declaring 1986 as the International Year of Peace, the appeal of the United Nations to the member states and people is "to join with the United Nations in its resolute efforts to safeguard peace and the future of humanity", has become more significant and relevant. We have to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war, and live together in peace with one other. The idea of a world beyond war is the basic tenet of the United Nations transcending all differences of race, religion, political ideology. The UN has to be harnessed more constructively and purposefully for resolving the problems of the world, which is over-armed, over-militarised and haunted by nuclear threat. There is an urgent and pressing need for a just and non-violent settlement of disputes among the neighbouring countries and regional disputes.

In this context the sound advice of Sri Aurobindo about the relevance and need for proper use of United Nations merits deep consideration by the participants of this seminar.

The concept of I' asudaika Kutumbakam "Universal family"—as enunciated by our ancient sages, needs to be realised through practical means for achieving tangible results. The spiritual foundations of man have to be recognised and realised, and on that firm base the edifice of world community may have to be built. "Reverence for life" as propounded and practised by Dr. Albert Scheitzer may also help the humanity in cultivating the right attitude towards fellow beings. Even though the modern means of transport and communication reduced the space and time and brought the human race closer in physical terms, the existing chasm between nation states and their constituent citizens has not been bridged.

Sri Aurobindo's vision of human unity has suggested that the remedy for the ills consists in a spiritual religion. The inner spirit is indeed one, but more than any other the spiritual life insists on freedom and variation in its self-expression and means of development. A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a sacred spirit, a divine reality, in which we are all one; that humanity is the highest vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a kingdom of this Divine Spirit upon earth. By its growth within

us, oneness with our fellow men will become the leading principle of all our life, not merely a principle of cooperation but a 'deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life. There must be the realisation by the individual that only in the life of his fellowmen is his own life complete. There must be realisation by the race that only on the free and full life of the individual can its own perfection and permanent happiness be founded.

The vision of Maharishi Aurobindo for human unity should stir the human beings to sink their differences, racial, religious, national, political, regional and achieve solidarity based on spiritual values. Gandhiji's love and non-violence, and Panch Sheel and Non-aligned Movement as shared by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru are the firm steps towards reaching the cherished goal - Human Unity. It is our task to grapple with the existing realities of human predicament and formulate policies, programmes and strategies for achieving the cherished goals of human unity, peace and progress. We must dedicate ourselves to strive our utmost for translation of Sri Aurobindo's vision into reality during the year 1987, which is dawning on us within a couple of days. Time is the essence. The first priority is "human unity", so as to progress on its onward march towards the immortality of human race, nay entire living beings.

Before concluding I thank the Aurobindo Centre for inviting me here to inaugurate the seminar.

## Knowledge of Life

I AM VERY happy to be associated with the Ram Narayan Vaidya Award function organised by the Ram Narayan Vaidya Ayurveda Research Trust.

The meaning of Ayurveda is "Knowledge of Life". While in Ayurvedic system one does not only treat diseases, it also ensures composite well-being of an individual in physical and mental context. It is a precious treasure of knowledge to enrich human life.

When Allopathic system of medicine had not penetrated in our country, the main systems of medicine were Ayurveda and Unani, which were really effective. Alongwith the material progress of man, new diseases started appearing. There was little mention of cancer in earlier times. Now such diseases have assumed alarming proportions. Even more dangerous diseases than these like AIDS have started tearing our heads.

I feel that when man deviates from the laws of nature and adopts devious means, he becomes victim to serious ailments. One of the reasons of ill health is not to use fresh and natural foods, but to resort to preserved foods kept for long durations with the help of chemicals and preservatives.

Another main reason for ill health is all pervasive pollution. The air and water pollution is indeed dangerous. No doubt it is necessary for man to set up factories and plants for his prosperity. But the poisonous fumes emanating from the chimneys of factories can be a source of a hundred diseases. The industrial wastes and effluents being thrown in rivers become a source of terrible pollution. Even fish, affected by polluted water, if consumed, can be a source of danger to good health and life.

One does not dispute the fact that in some cases Allopathic system can be very effective in combating diseases, but these drugs can cause serious side-effects, which mercifully are not caused by the medicines of Ayurvedic system.

I have a feeling that Ayurvedic system in our country is not receiving as much attention as it should have. Even Yoga has caught fancy of people in foreign countries more than in our country.

Our *Rishis* and *Munis* roamed for centuries in the Himalayas, Vindhya, Eastern and Western Ghats in search of herbs. They made very effective use of plants like *Neem*, *Babool*, *Tulsi*, etc. and treated patients with these. Now after centuries these ordinary remedies are finding their way in the markets in developed countries under their own terminologies. The Ayurvedic use of *Haldi*, *Zeera*, Coriander leaves, *Sonth*, *Lahsun*, Cloves, Cinnamon and Cardamom have proved highly effective as remedies in some diseases. *Heeng*, *Methi*, *Harar*, *Bheda* and *Amla* have been extremely useful. Ayurvedic medicines are much cheaper and free of ill effects.

With the induction of Allopathic system our indigenous systems of medicine were relegated to the background. But now we are independent. It is our duty to pay more attention to the promotion of our own systems of medicine, which are simpler and closer to life. Ayurvedic remedies are cheaper and within the reach of the poor people.

Alongwith these aspects we shall have to take into consideration other causes of ill health like rising population, unhygienic living conditions in urban areas, dire poverty and drug addiction, etc.

Out of two personalities whom have been conferred honours today, Professor Priyavrat Sharma is present personally to receive the award. But the other recipient Vaidya, Ranjeet Rai Desai is being conferred this honour posthumously. His dedication to Ayurveda will be remembered for long.

Our country needs the dedicated services of persons like late Pandit Ram Narayan Vaidya whose life long devotion and selfless service in the cause of Ayurveda has set an illustrious example. At the age of 85 he invested all his assets into the setting up of this Trust. This Trust has been engaged in the research activities admirably. I felicitate all members of this organisation and wish them all success.

## **Miscellaneous**



## Paradise on Earth

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here amidst an enchanting environment. I am grateful to the Municipal Body of Port Blair for their kind thought of honouring me and for the good words mentioned about me.

As Home Minister of India, I had the opportunity to be well acquainted with Port Blair and the entire cluster of 556 islands spread like emeralds in the blue waters of the sea. The very mention of the name Andamians and Nicobar Islands gives inspiration to all Indians. These islands and all of you inhabiting here are very fortunate as God seemed to have created these islands with a special care and attention. I have read that the Andamans archipelago derived its name from "Handuman", same as the legendary hero of Ramayana fame, Lord Hanuman. The evergreen forests enveloped between white sandy beaches, the fauna with a large variety of animals and birds and above all its inhabitants including the children of nature, whom we call as tribals, go to make these islands as a paradise for gods, not to speak about us, poor mortals. The islands as a group witnessed many historical changes over the last couple of centuries. However, the islands and this capital city of Port Blair occupy a special place in the hearts of all Indians. They have become an integral part of our freedom struggle. In fact, as a place of incarceration of many freedom fighters during the colonial rule, Port Blair occupies a place of eminence among our sacred spots.

People belonging to all faiths, languages and religions are living here like brothers and sisters with exemplary spirit of unity and co-operation. There has been considerable economic development in the islands during successive five year plans and I am told that the per capita plan expenditure has increased from Rs. 177 in the First Plan period to Rs. 1414 in the Fifth Plan period which must have increased further in the current Sixth Plan. This indicates a large measure of success which is reflected in every aspect of life that I see around me here. You deserve special congratulations for the results achieved

against many obstacles, chief being the distance from the mainland. However, I am glad to observe that despite this barrier, the islands have made significant advance over the last 35 years. Having committed to ensure balanced regional development, the Union Government always feels more concerned about the development of farflung areas. I assure you that the Union Government will continue to have a special consideration for the progress of this island territory and render all possible help.

I am of the opinion that more and more people from the mainland should come here for rest and recreation which will help in increasing tourist earnings. They have many lessons to learn from the way people are living here in amity and peace, proving worthy of themselves as inheritors of the traditions set by generations of freedom fighters. I am aware that the number of visitors from the mainland are increasing but it is not enough. I hope that with the improvement in transport facilities, the tourist traffic will increase further. I do hope that while planning for economic development, the Union Territory Administration will pay utmost attention to the preservation of environment in these islands.

With these few words, I conclude by wishing you all success in future. I thank the Chairman of the Municipal Board and other members for according me this honour, the warmth and cordiality which I will cherish for a long time to come.

## Dynamism and Determination

I FEEL HAPPY to be here in this North Andamans Islands and meet all of you, living happily in perfect harmony and co-operation with each other. I am told that a majority of you settled here, came from erstwhile East Pakistan. One thing which has impressed me most is the way you settled here quickly and became part and parcel of the locality.

I have noticed that there has been significant progress over the years and I congratulate all of you on your initiative, drive and hard work, but for which the progress would not have been there today. I can well imagine the difficulties and hardships that you had faced when you came here as settlers. But the progress made by you reflects your dynamism and determination. In a short span of time, you have integrated fully into this area and created a new environment. In this context, I appeal to you not to disturb and destroy the natural environment in the mistaken impression that progress will not come otherwise. In many parts of the world, especially in the industrialised and developed countries, the neglect of environment in the past started telling upon the life of the people. We have to take appropriate lessons in time and take constructive steps from the beginning.

I wish you all success in your future endeavours and I pray to God to bless you all.

## Integration and Brotherhood

**I**T GIVES ME pleasure to be here in this Middle Andamans Islands and spend some time with all of you. As Home Minister of India, I had gained some acquaintance with the problems of these islands and I have come here to spend a week visiting all the islands in order to renew my acquaintance and gain fresh knowledge.

I feel happy that all of you, though coming from different parts of our mainland, are woven together into a close-knit society and have achieved national integration imbued with a strong sense of brotherhood. I congratulate you all on this unique achievement and I hope that you will continue to maintain the same spirit. It is a matter of pride that you achieved considerable progress in a short-span of time by dint of your hard work and fortitude. In the pursuit of progress and improving your welfare, you made a signal contribution to the development of the national economy as a whole. I feel extremely happy that you have been able to turn the corner and I hope that you will continue to travel in the same direction and become shining examples of good citizenship for our brothers and sisters on the mainland.

I am aware that there is still a long way to go to reach the final goal of removal of poverty, ignorance and disease. But given the goodwill and hard work, I am sure that your attempts will be crowned with success. The Government of India are striving hard to develop all the areas of the country with even progress. I feel that you are all set to perform new feats and scale new heights, once the transport bottle-neck is removed.

I will cherish the memory of my visit here for a long time to come. I thank you for the spontaneous welcome given to me.

I wish you all success.

## Production and Distribution

I FEEL HAPPY to be here with you all and associate myself with the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Bharat Merchants Chamber. The Chamber has made significant progress over the last twenty-five years since its inception in 1960 and it deserves hearty congratulations. This is an occasion to be celebrated for it gives a valuable opportunity to review the past as well as to plan the future. You have all heard just now from Shri Murlidhar Jain, President of Bharat Merchants Chamber, about the long list of achievements and the important role played by the trading community in the economic development of the country. As I understand, Bharat Merchants Chamber is confined mostly to traders dealing in textiles, yarn, provision and so on. As such, the primary duty of your members is to satisfy the consumer and to serve his interests.

Production and distribution are the two important aspects of any economic activity and all those who are associated with production and distribution of commodities and services, should bear in mind that they are serving the consumer. The duty of the distributor as trader is to see that the commodities produced are taken to the buyers and supplied to them in right quantity and quality. The welfare of society should be the motivating force behind every trading activity and traders as businessmen should try to maximise the welfare of people through their services without concentrating unduly on their profit motive. The size of consumer market in our vast country is expanding both in content and value, with increasing production of a variety of consumer goods ranging from foodstuffs to electronics. Thanks to the successive five year plans, our country has made significant alround progress. India is producing a large variety of consumer goods, unthinkable three decades ago. In this expansion, the trading community has also played a prominent role.

There is a social responsibility on the shoulders of the trading community. They are in close contact with the people and know their difficulties and preferences. Though we have made considerable

economic progress, yet there are a large number of people below the poverty line and people with low incomes. There are planned efforts to lift these people above and increase their incomes. During such transitional stages, it is necessary to see that they are able to secure necessities of life within their limited incomes. Here is a responsibility on all sections of traders, businessmen and industrialists to see that no exploitation of these weaker sections takes place. Efforts of the Government to eradicate poverty should be supplemented by willing service by you all in order to achieve the goal before the country. I am confident that our trading community will do all its best in achieving this goal and supplement the efforts of the Government in this mighty adventure.

Organisations like this are serving as links of understanding and cooperation between the appropriate Governmental authorities and the members. There is another role also, more important than the earlier one, that is acting as bridges between the manufacturers and the consumers. Looked at from this angle you are the trustees of the interests and welfare of people whom you want to serve. It is with this deep humanism that the father of our nation Mahatma Gandhi described you as the guardians and trustees. If you all adhere to this in word and deed I am sure that there will be smooth flow of commerce in society, contributing to the overall prosperity of the nation.

I am told that the Chamber has contributed its mite in providing relief to the victims of natural calamities like floods, earthquakes and droughts. It also gives me pleasure to know that the chamber is running a medical centre in its premises and providing timely medical aid to the needy. Being more fortunate and well placed in the society, I appeal to all well-to-do sections of our people like the members of the Chamber to emulate and strengthen these philanthropical efforts. There is more happiness in sacrifice as has been extolled again and again by great sages, saints, *gurus* and *acharyas* over the past many centuries. This is our tradition. Self-less sacrifice is considered as an act of worship, not a mere act of charity. I am confident that the members of the Chamber will do all their best and strengthen this tradition with renewed zeal and enthusiasm. Your prosperity increases along with the increase in the prosperity of all people and your welfare will get maximised along with the maximisation of people's welfare. There is a need to extend your area of operations to cover rural areas as a great majority of our people live there.

With these few words, I conclude by thanking the Bharat Merchants Chamber and its President for inviting me here.

## Tea—A Foreign Exchange Earner

I AM GLAD to be here today and to associate myself with this function. Tea is perhaps the most popular beverage throughout the world. A cup of tea cheers millions in the world. This is one way in which India, being a major producer and exporter of tea, is contributing to human happiness.

The President of the Tea Association of India Shri N.K. Daga has given a good account of Tea Industry and its problems in his speech and lightened my burden. Tea occupies a prominent place in our economy and has played an important role during the past century in our economic development. Employing more than a million workers, this is one commodity which has contributed significantly to India's foreign exchange earnings. Moreover, because of absence of large import requirements, its net contribution to India's balance of payments has been much more significant, especially since independence with the launching of Five Year Plans for economic development. Tea along with the other two traditional major foreign exchange earners namely Textiles and Jute, has contributed immensely to the country's capacity to finance much needed imports of capital goods for economic development.

The composition of our exports has undergone a thorough transformation over the last three decades. Now many new products like engineering goods, oil, electronics and so on are figuring prominently in our exports. In a way, this reflects the economic development achieved over the past six Five Year Plans. The importance of tea continues to grow along with the increasing standard of living of our people. Tea industry which has functioned well in the past, I hope, will continue to grow and prosper along with the growing prosperity of the people.

I feel happy to know about the welfare measures like free housing, medical facilities, education, etc. undertaken by the tea industry for the welfare of workers. I am told that the welfare measures are being extended to the surrounding villages and communities also. This

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Speech on the occasion of Meeting of Tea Association, Calcutta, August 3, 1985

deserves to be appreciated and I hope that other industries will also emulate this example and undertake such welfare measures in their industrial units and surrounding areas. Workers who contribute their labour to produce more wealth, should get priority treatment, not only in increased wages, welfare measures and so on, but also should be entitled for a proportionate share in the new wealth produced, I would repeat here, what I have said in other forums earlier, that workers must be regarded and treated as partners in industry, and allowed participation in management. I feel that this approach will help to develop good relations between capital and labour and thus contribute to the overall growth and prosperity of the country.

I am aware of the special problems of the tea industry and I have no doubt that the appropriate authorities will consider them. The country is marching ahead with a new dynamism and I am confident that this new dynamism will inspire and benefit the tea industry as well.

Before concluding, I thank the President of Tea Association Shri Daga for inviting me here and enabling me to have this opportunity of meeting you. I wish the tea industry further success in the years ahead.



## Beautiful Islands

I FEEL HAPPY to be here and grateful for the warm and cordial reception accorded to me in this Island. I find that this Island is the largest of the Islands not only in area but in terms of population also, Extending east to west, your Island is nearest to the mainland. Today is the second day of my visit to Lakshadweep. To many of us Lakshadweep means one lakh islands. Though the number of islands is much less, which can be counted on fingers, the very mention of the name Lakshadweep touches our hearts, telling us the existence of natural prosperity dominated by coconut trees and unlimited wealth of sea around. One is fortunate to live in these beautiful islands.

Before coming here, on the way I visited the tomb of Hazrat Ubeidullah and paid my respects to that great saint who is generally believed to have brought Islam to these Islands long ago in the seventh century and spread the message of Prophet Mohammad. It gives me immense satisfaction that the tradition is well maintained till today and I hope that it will be continued in future with greater devotion and faith. I feel deeply touched by the friendly people as well as by the beauty of nature prevailing here. I appeal to all of you to see that this natural environment will not be disturbed and take all possible steps to enrich the same. We have to live in communion, not in conflict, with nature and utilize science and technology in the service of men and nature.

Your Island, like others in this archipelago, has made considerable progress since independence. I am told that about Rs. 41 crores have been spent for the development over the previous plan periods and that the current five year plan envisages an outlay of as much as Rs. 44 crores. The tempo of progress has steadily gone up on account of increased outlays from Rs. 40 lakhs in the Second Plan to Rs. 2950 lakhs in the Sixth Plan. What is more significant for the future is that the envisaged outlay of Rs. 44 crores in the current plan is higher than the entire outlay incurred so far under six Five Year Plans. I find that

every Island is now endowed with modern means of living like schools, electricity, health centres, post offices and so on. I am sure that the Islands will prosper further in the current Five Year Plan period and people will enjoy higher standards of living. Yesterday, I had inaugurated the new building of the Lakshadweep Sahitya Kala Academy at Kavaratti, which I am sure, will serve as a link between the Islands and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and oneness.

I am aware of the special problems of the islands, especially the problems of transport and communications which impede progress. I am sure that many of these will be solved in the current plan period.

Before concluding, I once again thank you all for the warm reception extended to me which I will cherish for a long time to come.

## A Vital Link

I AM VERY happy to visit Rajasthan once again. I am very glad to come to this land of chivalry which has a past history of great sacrifices for the cause of the nation. In spite of recurring natural problems like drought, the people of Rajasthan have always worked hard and contributed to the development of the State and the country.

On this occasion of laying the foundation stone of the bridge on Banganga river, I would like to mention that the development of roads and transport are very essential for the development of the economy of a vast country like ours. Although various modes of transport are adopted for different requirements, road transport is specially suitable because of its comparatively low investment and greater flexibility to cater to the needs of the farmer to carry the agricultural produce to the markets. Though there has been a tremendous development in this field since independence, yet much more is required to be done so that the farthest village is made accessible by road, so that educational and medical facilities and others benefits can flow to every nook and corner of the country.

Rajasthan comprising many erstwhile princely states had a very small road net-work at the time of independence. I am told now, it has a net-work of nearly 49,000 km. of roads. For such a vast state, rich in minerals, more and better roads and bridges are required. This bridge will be one vital link in the process of enhancing the road net-work in the State.

This region of Rajasthan is one of the rich agricultural areas which contributes substantially to the economy of the State. I learn that apart from agriculture, a number of industries have sprung up in the region and education, veterinary, medical and public health facilities have also been expanded in recent years. Because of the non-perennial nature of the rivers and rivulets, many of them have remained unbridged, but I am glad to know that both the State and the Centre are taking steps for the construction of a number of bridges in the

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Speech while laying the foundation stone of the bridge across the river Banganga, Rajasthan, April 19, 1986

region. I am convinced that if the progress made so far is any indicator, this region is bound to flourish more and more in the coming years.

As mentioned by the Director General (Road Development) the Central Government has also contributed towards improvement of the National Highways and bridges in the region. The completion of this bridge, I am sure, will facilitate for a smooth and uninterrupted flow of traffic both in goods and passengers in all directions. I am very glad to learn that the Government of Rajasthan has been able to concentrate on irrigation and power as well as on development of infrastructure like roads despite heavy preoccupation with drought. Though the investment on roads in the past has been rather low, I hope by the turn of the century, it will be possible to mobilise more resources to further strengthen the roads and road building activities. I understand that latest know-how and technology have been made available for quick execution of road building projects. I am sure that this will help Rajasthan in building roads and bridges at economic costs without depending on outside assistance.

I have great pleasure now in laying the foundation stone of the bridge across the river Banganga.

## Shelter to All

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be with you in this small but beautiful town. Quilon has a rich and ancient tradition. With backwaters, coconut groves and a variety of vegetation, you have 'God's plenty' here. It is apt that from a district whose economy revolves mainly on the fruits of labour of its working class i.e. the cashew workers, coir workers, plantation workers and fishermen, an innovative project has come up for the benefit of the weaker sections.

Nirmithi Kendra, as I understand, is a commendable attempt at finding solutions to the shelter problems of the weaker sections of society. A house to stay is as important as this body to the soul. A house of one's own is a symbol of security and individual peace. Viewed against this background, housing is as much a social concern as an individual concern.

Housing for the masses has always enjoyed special attention of our planners. We have yet to go a long way in providing shelter to many people especially in the rural areas. Our limited resources call for concerted efforts by the individual, the Government and the non-governmental agencies in mobilising resources. But resources are not everything. More than money, it is the man behind that matters. In this state where everyone sets a premium by education there shall not be any dearth of trained manpower. But men and money also do not solve the problem. Materials are vital in this process. When housing is undertaken on a large scale, such as you are doing in Kerala, shortage of material is a natural off-shoot. We should explore new avenues to put to use locally available cheap materials for house construction. A happy combination of man, material and money alone will take our housing programmes to its successful completion. It is in this context that we find the relevance of Nirmithi kendras such as the one you have initiated in Quilon District. I am impressed by your objective to serve as a nodal agency to coordinate housing activities in the district. But your success depends on how best these objectives will be translated into action. But I understand from your Chief Minister Shri

Karunakaran and your Housing Minister Shri Joseph that the Government intends to set up similar Nirmithi Kendras in other districts also.

Our country is marching ahead with pride and determination. The poor people in the villages, the tribals living in the hills and forests, the scheduled castes living in the *busties*, the slum dwellers, the poor workers engaged in traditional occupations, all should be contributors to and not just the beneficiaries of development. Your commitment in accomplishing the most cherished desire of the weaker sections to have a home, has endearingly imbibed our national concern for the weaker sections. I congratulate the sponsors of this innovative venture, the District Collector and his team, for their efforts in setting up the Nirmithi Kendra.

In fact, our country is our home. The Bible tells us "In my father's house there are many mansions". Our ancestors bequeathed to us a solid mansion; we should preserve it, we should add on to it. We have never been and shall never be a house divided against itself.

## Improving Health Standards

**H**EALTH IS THE greatest boon to any human being. A man be placed with all riches and opulence, but if he is not endowed with good health, all his resource are meaningless. Good health enables any person to take part in any physical work and can make achievements, but if he is afflicted by a serious ailment, he becomes dependent on others.

The best way of preventing common diseases is to take simple food and lead a disciplined life. The progress of man ironically has brought a spate of serious diseases. For example, no perfect treatment of cancer has been found so far which in many cases proves fatal. One also hears of exotic diseases like AIDS.

In view of these things, research in medicine has all paramount importance. The research should aim at diagnosing and treating a disease in its inceptive stage to prevent it from taking a serious shape with a view to alleviating the sufferings to men. It is also necessary to develop investigation into diseases and drugs. The clinical tests are very important for diagnosis.

The Centre which is being inaugurated today deals with the investigation and research aspects. It has been equipped with the most sophisticated equipment like whole body C.T. Scanner, Ultra Sonography, EEG, Gamma Cameras etc.

I have been told that the Lisie Medical Institution is the biggest institution of the kind in the private sector. It has 700 beds and many doctors. It has a Pharmacy College and Medical Laboratory Training Course.

I am glad that this institution has been given licence for manufacturing various drugs, which are used by other hospitals also. I am glad that this institution was started by the Christians with a missionary zeal. They are treating the poor children, women and men free of charge.

The birth rate and death rate in Kerala are much less than other states in the country. Probably the reason for death rate to be so low is

the provision of medical facilities. To have a healthy mind, it is necessary to have a healthy body. To sharpen the intellect, one must enjoy perfect health. Only then one can attain heights in every field. We have to provide primary health facilities to every one, is the objective of Government to be achieved by 2000 A.D. I would suggest that primary health and prevention of diseases should be included in the curriculum in schools. Cleanliness is next to Godliness. It is necessary to inculcate health and hygiene among the people.

For certain diseases drugs have to be imported from abroad. Our research should aim at developing the advanced drugs to reduce if not totally eliminate our dependence on imports. I hope that the Lisie Medical Institution will carry on with this objective and carry the research in various systems of medicine for the greatest good of the people. I would also like to have a large number of mobile dispensaries to serve the rural masses, for whom it is difficult to utilise facilities in big cities.

I am very glad to be here today and give my best wishes to this Institution and the people of Kerala.



## Moulding the Ethos

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today to participate in the first centenary celebrations of the Arch-diocese of Verapoly. It is the first Arch-diocese in Kerala and one of the six in India. The Arch-diocese deserves to be congratulated for gaining paramount importance in the history of the Catholic Church in India and for the important role it played in shaping the destinies of the Church in Kerala.

It is well known that Christianity came here long ago with the arrival of St. Thomas, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ. Many joined him and thus the first Church in India was formed in Kerala, which grew steadily over the centuries.

Christianity is a religion of God and Service to humanity. It teaches universal brotherhood, charity and compassion. It lays stress on help and succour to the poor, the sick, the widows and the orphans. It propagates the gentle principles of forgiveness and mercy. This noble religion believes in the kingdom of God and the spirit of tolerance. It teaches love to one's enemies. Christianity in India contributed a great deal in moulding the ethos of this country. It played a pioneering role in the modern, technical education. Christian societies took initiative in opening schools at a number of places, which helped our people acquire knowledge in various fields. Christian intellectuals fostered a pragmatic outlook, brought fine architecture to this country and introduced modern scientific methods in agriculture and other occupations. Libraries, printing presses and publishing houses were also set up. Christian organisations have also been very active in social service. People of the country will always remember with gratitude the services rendered by Mother Teresa, who can be called an angel of mercy. The Christian social endeavour aims at alleviating the sufferings of all irrespective of religion, caste, creed and colour. Mahatma Gandhi was profoundly influenced by Christianity. No wonder that some people have called Gandhiji "The greatest Christian of them all" Gandhiji shared the principles of uplifting the downtrodden and respect for women with the Christian concepts.

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Speech at the first centenary celebrations of the Arch-Diocese of Verapoly, Cochin (Kerala), August 31, 1986

Indian Christians were deeply involved in our national struggle for independence. Most of them preferred national independence over foreign rule. In free India, Christians have been holding high offices both in Civil and Defence organisations and have prospered in many fields. India is a mosaic of many religions and everyone has a right to profess and propagate his faith freely in this secular and democratic state. Christians are a part and parcel of our great nation and alongwith others they enjoy equal opportunities of advancement and development. Every Indian participates in the spirit of joy at Christian festivals, as Christians take part in the festivities of other communities in the country. These common bonds of brotherhood make for the cultural unity of our motherland.

Religion should be a unifying force in our diverse society. But in some parts of our country, religion is used for disruptive purposes. This should never be allowed and everything should be done to preserve and promote the unity of the nation and integrity of the country. Some self-seeking persons tend to exploit religion to achieve their selfish ends. Some may be encouraged by certain foreign powers, who do not like to see India march on the road to development and prosperity. Whatever may be their motives, we should not allow them to bring disunity in our people and to weaken our country. Our Constitution guarantees enough freedom to the people to engage in political activity within the democratic frame-work. Nothing should be done beyond the guarantees given in the Constitution, which was framed by its founding fathers after great care and deliberations.

We have also to remember the importance of discipline and character building. We have to inculcate in our youths the qualities of self-respect, self-reliance and a dynamic outlook. We have to save our young men and women from evils like drug addiction. We have to engender in the society, qualities of good citizenship. The Church, I am sure, can play a very useful role in the achievement of such objectives. In fact, all social and religious organisations should pay particular attention to these aspects, if we want to ensure the welfare and well-being of our people.

I have been told that Bishop Angelo Francis of Malabar composed the first ever grammar for the Malayalam vernacular language in 1709. Similarly the Malayalam script was first printed with the efforts of your missionaries of Verapoly. In 1876 you were able to start a bi-monthly journal. This is, perhaps, the oldest Malayalam paper in Kerala.

I have also learnt of the great contributions of Archbishop Dr. Joseph Attipethy. He built four first-grade University Colleges, from which people of all communities have benefited. He also built up four major hospitals at various centres. Whereas these institutions speak of the missionary zeal of that pioneering spirit, these are the living examples of Christian concept of service to humanity.

I am sure, the present Archbishop Dr. Joseph Kelanthesa is carrying on the torch of his predecessors. Religious leaders have a special place in our society. They are highly respected and are looked upon as teachers and guides. It is the responsibility of these leaders to give a direction to society to strengthen the forces of ethics and morality, to instil a spirit of brotherhood among people and to create an ethos of tolerance, peace and goodwill among all sections. I do hope your Arch-diocese will continue to play a noble part in this direction.

I give my best wishes to the Arch-diocese of Verapoly and all people of Kerala. I am certain you will march from strength to strength and help create an environment in which all of us can achieve nobler goals.

## Upholder of Values

I AM GLAD to be here and to associate myself with the celebration of the 175th Anniversary of the founding of the Bible Society in India. India is the birth place of many faiths and in upholding eternal values like truth, love, compassion and justice. In a world full of greed, anger, jealousy and hatred, spiritual reserves offer a ray of hope to mankind. I am told that the Bible Society of India is involved in the great task of *translating, producing and distributing the scriptures* throughout the length and breadth of India. I recall at this moment the very pleasant morning when I participated at the release of the Punjabi Common Language Bible. The Bible is held in high esteem in the world.

The world is on the threshold of a nuclear confrontation with major powers diverting and devoting resources for creation of more and more dangerous nuclear weapons. Fear and suspicion are the root cause of this confrontation and it is highly necessary to create a climate of love and cooperation for the removal of fear from the world. The need for spiritual strength is felt everywhere as the dangers from modern technology are increasing. And this spiritual strength can come to us only from the concept of God. The source of this strength can be revealed to us only by God and by his word; the Scriptures of the world are most valuable to humanity.

I am told that the Bible has been translated and published in more than 1800 languages of the world by the joint efforts of all the national Bible Societies of more than 150 countries which are members of the UBS, of which the Bible Society of India is a founder member from 1946. It is a laudable effort and others should emulate the example. I wish you well as you move forward in the years ahead of you.

All that the Bible Society in India has been able to accomplish in the past 175 years would not have been possible but for the good will and sympathetic support given to these efforts by the people of this country, who are spiritual and tolerant.

The Scriptures are second to none in providing us with useful guidelines for the spiritual awakening of people. I look forward to the great efforts of the Bible Society of India in pursuing their noble objective of spreading knowledge and their vision of peace and prosperity, solidarity and harmony and goodwill through spiritualism.

I hope that you will stand shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the people to build bridges of friendship among all sections of people and establish universal brotherhood. May God grant strength to all of us to move forward towards the goal.

## Caring The Sick

I AM VERY happy to be with you all on this happy occasion of the Valedictory Function of Centenary Celebrations of the St. Martha's Hospital, Bangalore. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the sisters of the Good Shepherd Congregation and the staff of the hospital for the very good work done by them during the last one hundred years.

India has a long way to go if we are to achieve the goal of "Health for All" before 2000 A.D. We have to make a concerted effort. The people and the voluntary agencies must play their role to supplement the efforts of the Government. The voluntary health services can bring on greater dimensions of health care over and above that provide for the mere treatment of sickness. They can and should provide for the care of the whole person—physical, mental, social and spiritual.

India has subscribed to the call of "Health for All by 2000 A.D.", given at the Alma Ata Conference. We have to make greater efforts if we are to reach even a part of the targets kept by us. There are various reasons for shortfall—poverty, malnutrition, unemployment, illiteracy, and many others. But I have great faith in our people. Given the will we can reach those targets and achieve even more. India has done well in some fields; there is no reason why we cannot achieve our targets in the field of health also.

It is known today that the greatest contribution of health can come from good lifestyle. Smoking brings about many diseases, and predisposes to many. Avoiding smoking will reduce the risk of cancer of the lung, diseases of the heart and many other diseases; so also, alcohol, which is a social evil, altering behaviour. Our people used to observe, healthy habits in daily life, leading to health. Can't we adopt them once again, for better health?

There is pollution everywhere—in the water and in the air, leading to tragedies. We have to observe the cardinal principles of purity in mind today and purity of five natural elements. If we do not, we will have to pay the penalty of sickness and suffering.

In achieving health, emphasis has to be placed on community health and primary health. They are the basic requirements for achieving health for all. Primary health care is comprehensive health care, as the first element of a continuing health care. But primary health care cannot stand by itself. We need the hospitals to support and extend the primary health care.

The hospital must remodel themselves. The old concepts of institutions who care for the sick, coming to the hospital for cure and care must give place to comprehensive care. The hospitals should reach out to the people and provide continuing care. They should participate actively in promoting health, preventing disease, caring of the sick and rehabilitation of the disabled. The hospitals should extend the care and provide cure for the sick by various programmes such as immunization, health education and extension projects. In this context, I suggest that mobile hospitals should be developed so that doctors go in search of patients not vice-versa.

Hospitals must provide for the care of the sick with competence and compassion. The two are complementary and not mutually exclusive. Without competence, the care provided will not help to restore the sick to health. Without compassion and understanding, the care will not be meaningful. Everyone working in the hospital must see the face of God in the faces of the sick and suffering. Commercialisation and unethical practice seem to be creeping into the medical profession and hospitals.

A Voluntary hospital like St. Martha's Hospital have service alone as motivation and it is with this motive that the sisters of the Good Shepherd came all the way from Europe to India. It is difficult for us at this distant time, even to imagine the hardships undergone by the sisters. They came from Ireland, France and Germany. They responded to the call of serving the sick and suffering, even though they themselves were not trained doctors or nurses. I am glad that the torch is being passed on from generation to generation and to the Indian sisters so that service with the same dedication and selfless sacrifices may continue.

One important part of the health care services is the availability of medicines, which are safe, effective and within the reach of the people. The Government have recently announced the New Drug Policy. It is hoped that the country will have adequate quantities of the needed medicines, especially those to fight more common and dangerous diseases-tuberculosis, leprosy and other infectious diseases. Un-

fortunately, greed often comes in the way of production, distribution and availability of drugs which are really needed. Tonics are produced in great quantities. They are promoted and sold with very large profit margins. Other essential drugs are not available to meet the need. We have today, in this country, many tens of thousands of formulations. The Hathi Committee and other Committees and the World Health Organization have determined that only a few hundreds are needed for the care of the sick and to prevent disease. It is complained sometimes that many of the medicines produced are of sub-standard quality. It is necessary to ensure good quality. Spurious and harmful drugs must be eliminated. Exploitation of the people by the manufacturers, whether national or multinational must stop. The medical profession and hospitals have an important role in ensuring that only really needed drugs are used.

I wish this hospital all success in their task of keeping people healthy and caring for the sick.



## A Humane Profession

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here and to give away National Awards to Nursing Personnel. National awards are given annually to nurses, Lady Health Visitors and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives who have distinguished themselves in the performance to their duties. The institution of these awards for honouring the noble profession of nursing is a commendable step in the right direction and I compliment the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for this.

On this day, when we are bestowing honour on this noble profession for dedicated, humane services to mankind, one is reminded of Florence Nightingale, affectionately known by all whom she served, as "Lady with the Lamp". The courage, devotion and dedication with which she brought this profession to its present status is well recorded in the history of the world, and in the history of development of nursing profession. There are many others who have rendered selfless service to mankind. We owe gratitude to all of them.

In a world in which four-fifth of the population has no access to any permanent form of health care and in which millions more are disenchanted with the service provided by conventional health systems, primary health care is the key to achieve an acceptable level of health for all. The international conference on Primary health care held at Alma Ata in the USSR in 1978 drew up the fundamental principles of this far-reaching concept and embodied them in the Declaration of Alma Ata. Emphasis was laid that, health, which is a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, is a fundamental human right and that attainment of the highest possible level of health is the most important world-wide social goal. The promotion and protection of the health of the people is essential to sustain economic and social development and contributes to the better quality of life.

The Primary Health Care concept and making health available, assign a special responsibility to the nursing profession. Nursing care has been in existence in the world from the very day the world came

into being. Through the ages and with the advancement of medical and scientific technology, the concept and functions of nursing have undergone vast changes. There is still much scope to make further changes in the role and functions of the nursing personnel in accordance with the need of the times. Primary health care means passing from highly specialised, complicated, magnified, curative care requiring highest level of technical skill and competence to a system of health care which would give priority to simple basic care, for maintaining life as well as the aid which will prevent illness from worsening simple curative measures.

Health professionals should learn to work with the people as well as for the people. Health information education should form a part and parcel of all health care services. Efforts should be made to secure complete integration of all plans for health and human development with the overall national socio-economic development process, specially with the more closely related sectors like food production, social welfare, water supply and sanitation. Building nation's health should be the most important target for all national development schemes. Special emphasis should also be laid on integrating the best of every system of medicine like *Ayurveda*, *Siddha*, Homoeopathy for the benefit of mankind. Nursing profession in their practice may think of incorporating simple home medicines for the welfare of the community. Nursing should take up the challenge of sharing health care responsibilities for millions. I am fully confident that the nursing profession can meet this challenge as the profession is known for its dedication and selfless service to humanity. Nursing being a "humane call" has always been very close to suffering humanity. A nurse apart from being an Aide to the doctor has an independent role to play. It is the nurse who is with the patient round the clock and brings life and happiness to the patient and family with her personal care. Her role extends from the care of pregnant mother to newborns, school age children, adults and aged. Throughout all ages she gives personal care, immunization for preventable diseases, nutrition education, ways of healthful living by adopting small family norms, etc. Nurses by very nature of their contact with home, families can be the best health care providers. The combination of high degree of professional skill and human approach will make all the difference in the larger context of social well-being.

I hold the nursing profession in high esteem and have great admiration for its members. It is the motherly instinct that makes it the

most noble and "humane profession", selfless service and spirit of sacrifice distinguish this profession from others. I would wish the profession to maintain this attitude inspite of all odds in years to come. It is gratifying that social prejudice regarding this profession is gradually disappearing and community has started recognising the services rendered by the nurses. I am glad due recognition is given to all categories of nursing personnel, i.e. Nurses, Lady Health Visitors and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives. I congratulate all the awardees for their meritorious services in the field of nursing and their selfless devotion to duty.

## A Great Saint

I FEEL VERY happy to visit the birthplace of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and to lay the foundation stone of the Auditorium. I readily responded to the invitation as my heart is always turned towards the great spiritual leaders of India. I consider myself fortunate in coming over here to have the privilege of associating myself with this function.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had electrified the masses with his message of *bhakti* throughout the length and breadth of India. His extensive tour of pilgrimage took him to all parts of the country. India was in a melting pot during the fifteenth century and people were in a state of spiritual confusion and decay. Ritualistic rigidities and sectarian animosities had sapped the energies of the people. There was a great need for a concerted attempt to synthesise the warring faiths and bring out the essence of all paths. It was perhaps as an answer, that the 15th and 16th centuries saw a number of saints in all parts of the country, who put new life into the masses by pointing out the oneness of God, despite many seeming descriptions. It is no accident in history that great saints like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Ramananda, Vallabha Acharya, Nama Deva, Kabir and Guru Nanak Dev appeared on the horizon of India during this period and preached the gospel of brotherhood and dispelled ignorance. Their teachings emphasised the fundamental truth of all religious faiths, i.e. the unity of Godhead and the brotherhood of man. All these saints emphasised that sincerity and devotion are basic essentials for all to pursue, irrespective of caste, religion and economic status. They helped the people to attain spiritual progress through love and devotion. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu proved and propagated that through love and devotion, song and dance, a state of divine ecstasy could be reached in which the presence of God would be felt. Like his other great contemporaries, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu emphasised purity in thought and action, sincere devotion and service to all living creatures, as the means of realisation of God.

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Speech while laying the foundation stone of auditorium at Shree Mayapur, the birth place of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, January 22, 1987

Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu went round the country on a pilgrimage to spread the message of the ecstasy and efficacy of *bhakti devotion* to the masses and to preach the gospel of love and devotion. These saints of medieval India carried the same divine message of love and devotion, truth and tolerance, service and sacrifice, and strength and the forces of cultural unity and spiritual rejuvenation of India. Their endless and incessant endeavours form the basis of our present day policy of secularism, respect to all faiths and freedom to practice one's faith. Narrow outlook and concern with ritualism have been replaced by broad vision and deeper devotion to divinity. Caste rigidity and religious bigotry have yielded place to a new order based on eternal values like truth, love, compassion, service and sacrifice.

Our policy of secularism is based on these eternal values spread by saints like Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and many others in all parts of our vast country. These values provide the basic foundation of our unity and integrity as a nation. It is time for us now to reiterate our faith in these fundamental values handed over to us by our saints, *gurus*, *avatars* throughout the long course of our country's history and rededicate ourselves to the service of the nation. We cannot sit idle when evil forces of destruction and disunity are at work. We must resist and defeat the evil forces by keeping ourselves ever vigilant, armed with the lives and teachings of great saints like Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

I thank the organisers for inviting me here for laying the foundation of an Auditorium which I am sure, when completed will go a long way in meeting the needs of the people.

## Play for Growth

**I** AM VERY happy that our country has been given the honour to stage the World Table Tennis Championship for the third time, having held it earlier at Bombay in 1952 and at Calcutta in 1975. This time we are having the largest participation of teams from 63 countries and this is very encouraging.

Thanks to 9th Asian Games so successfully held in India in 1982 that we have such a beautiful sports arena for conducting this world meet. I am told that this stadium is the third largest in such stadiums of the world and so it is befitting that it has been named after the great lady, late Prime Minister of India, Shrimati Indira Gandhi.

I have no doubt that hundreds of matches which will be played in this arena during the 12-day competitions will provide a feast of table tennis to our countrymen and to the guests from abroad. I wish all of you who have come from all corners of the world, an enjoyable stay in India.

This is the Golden Jubilee Year of the Table Tennis Federation of India which is the founder member of the International Table Tennis Federation. My best wishes to all the members of the Federation and in particular to the Table Tennis players present and past, for the further growth of the game in our country.

I have now great pleasure to declare open the 39th World Table Tennis Championship.

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Address at the inaugural function of the 39th World Table Tennis Championship, Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi, February 18, 1987

## Local Bodies

**I**T GIVES ME great pleasure to be here today to participate in the centenary celebrations of the Gwalior Municipal Corporation. Gwalior is one of our most important historic cities with a long history and rich traditions. It is one of the largest and a very colourful city of Madhya Pradesh. It is endowed with many seats of learning in almost every field of life like agriculture, arts, engineering and medicine. It is an important industrial and commercial centre. It is sanctified by the memories of persons like the great musician Mian Tansen, the intrepid patriot Rani Jhansi and Tatya Tope. This town is famous for its formidable Port, its temples, its mosques and many historical monuments.

The Municipal Corporation of Gwalior has completed 100 years of its existence today. The State Municipality of Lashkar was established by the then Council of Regency on 6th June, 1887. Separate Municipalities for Gwalior and Morar towns were set up in 1904 and 1912 respectively. All these three Municipalities were amalgamated into one in 1913. This amalgamated Municipality of Gwalior attained the status of Municipal Corporation in 1956. At the moment it is serving about 6 lakh people. This Municipal Corporation has been rendering great service to the community. Local self-governments provide a useful foundation for our democratic system. These constitute a training ground for representatives of people to serve in higher bodies like State Assemblies and the Parliament. Some of our most eminent statesmen started their public life in Municipal Committees and later shouldered huge responsibilities guiding the destiny of the nation.

The most important objective of local bodies is to improve the conditions of living of the citizens in their jurisdiction. These bodies create opportunities for human beings to grow, to be able to think, to act, flourish and cooperate with one another for furtherance of the common cause of welfare of the people. The local bodies provide

important knowledge and experience for the growth of personality. These are a source of dynamic activity and practical opportunity for service of the community.

In our democratic set-up, politics has been playing an important role since Independence. Political consciousness has naturally gone to the grass-root level. Elections to local bodies are to a large extent influenced by political predilections. But I have always been of the view that for effective service of the people, local bodies should not let political thinking overtake the purpose of their real existence. Their purpose is to provide civic amenities to the citizens and to effect overall improvement of the cities and towns. The same applies to Panchayats in rural areas. But talking of Municipal Committees and Municipal Corporations, they have to help provide such facilities as to remove chaos and bring order in the civic existence. Let us take the problem of slums in big cities. Over a period these tend to become breeding grounds for disease and pestilence. Municipal Corporations have to plan the growth of cities in a systematic manner to avoid mushrooming of slums by anticipating the needs of the towns for the future 50 or 100 years. This work relates to laying of roads with sufficient room for widening the same at a future date. They have to undertake housing schemes for the poor and the deprived classes. The shelters should be built at cheap costs by using local materials. For a large migrant labour and visitors for short durations, public conveniences have to be provided. For children, especially those belonging to the unfortunate backward communities, reasonably equipped schools have to be constructed and playgrounds have to be arranged. "A man does not crawl on his belly alone" is a well-known axiom. He needs recreation and sustenance for his soul. Man is a social animal and needs outlet for artistic expression. It is the local bodies like Municipalities which provide community centres for social get togethers, libraries, parks and folk-theatres.

Our advanced technology and over-crowding of cities have taken a heavy toll of ecological balance. Trees which have been a source of life for us are being mercilessly decimated at certain places. It is a civic body which has to pay attention to the conservation of trees and to try to maintain ecological equilibrium.

The biggest ill, in my view, has been our inability to provide good drinking water to the entire population in our country. There are millions who have still to trudge long distances to fetch water. There are large numbers who fall victim to water-borne diseases. I think local



bodies have to play an important role to make efforts to provide potable water to the population to avoid inconvenience in this respect.

All of us know that our population has been growing at a fast rate. It may well be said that it is for the Government to implement a well conceived family welfare programme. But since the danger of overpopulation is so great and its ramifications so serious, that in my view it deserves the attention of everyone, especially the local bodies which are so close to the people.

A large number of our population have yet to reach the level of full health protection. We need a large number of dispensaries and hospitals to serve the people. I am aware that to provide all sorts of civic amenities, the limitation of funds is a formidable hurdle. Civic bodies to a great extent raise their own revenues. But it might be possible to overcome these difficulties by proper planning and rational distribution of resources.

With the general growth of living standards and development of high technology, the expectations and aspirations of the people have been rising considerably. The level of political awareness among our people has been rising astoundingly. They are making much more use of radio and television sets and newspapers. I feel the people of the country deserve greater exposure to the powerful electronic media but in view of tremendous poverty, most of them cannot afford the luxury of owning television sets. Perhaps local bodies like Municipal Corporations can devote their attention to provide community radio and television sets to members of deprived sections of people to acquire information and also make use of entertainment.

Urbanisation in our country has been going on at a fast speed and the trend is likely to continue with greater vigour and intensity than before. The fast pace of life in cities and towns would keep on luring people in villages to march towards the cities though their journeys may end up in slothful living. Our Municipal Corporations must plan ahead and provide for such eventualities.

It is the sacred duty of every institution in our country including the local bodies to strengthen the sense of unity among people and their emotional integration. We may have political differences, but it is most dangerous to divide the community on religious or caste basis. We waged a long struggle for independence and were able to cast away the foreign yoke. It was to build and strengthen the foundations of a united India without prejudices of caste, creed, religion and language. Language should not become a source of division. The founders of

modern India visualised a secular State with respect for all religions, rule of law, economic, social and political justice and equality.

It is ironical that in modern and free India communal riots should take place with such frequency. That is a blemish we should remove for all time to come. Let all religious and social leaders give a serious thought to this problem. How much energy shall we go on losing, how much destruction to our property we shall go on allowing and how much injury to our psyche shall we go on permitting? We should knit ourselves in the strong bonds of nationalism and make patriotism the very foundation of our life. Let us guard against disruptive elements who are out to create disharmony and disorder.

Material well-being is as important in human life as anything else. Each one of us needs basic necessities of life. Civic bodies, therefore, would do well to be a source of restricting if not eliminating disparities. No one should allow the growth of individual interests at the cost of community interests. It is only when individual interests are allied with public interest that the desired results can be achieved. In fact private interests have to be subordinated to the public good. If local bodies as yours become social catalysts, a new awakening can be caused.

I have had the occasion of seeing numerous local bodies closely, but I have found that unfortunately women do not achieve proper representation on such bodies. Women in fact form about half of our population. They are thus entitled to 50 per cent representation on all elective bodies but do they get proportionate representation? The answer is obvious, that very few women get elected to local bodies, State and Central legislatures. I feel that women can bring a soothing touch at least to local bodies, as they understand and appreciate better the problems affecting daily life of the people. I do not know how many women are members of your Corporation. I hope they have a sizeable representation in this enlightened city.

I congratulate you on the centenary celebrations of your Municipal Corporation and I am sure that you would continue to serve the people of Gwalior in the best possible manner and become an example for other Municipal Corporations in our country. I have my best wishes for all of you.

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very encouraging atmosphere of cooperation among all sections of the university community, and the rapport, in particular that exists between the administration and the teachers and students. This is extremely heartening, and I am confident that this would inculcate a disciplined work-oriented attitude among students. I am particularly gratified that some six thousands readers daily use your library facilities.

Today, the Government have come out with proposals for a New Educational Policy. We have made considerable progress in the field of education since Independence. However, there are still large sections of population who are still illiterate and uneducated. The supreme task before all of us is to eradicate ignorance and illiteracy.

Mr. Chancellor, you have today conferred honorary degrees upon four eminent men, from the realms of literature, medicine, science and philanthropy. I acclaim your choice, and should like to express my own personal sense of satisfaction at the recognition extended where it is so richly deserved.

I should like to congratulate once again all the recipients of the academic degrees, and address a few words to them. Many of you would be leaving this University from which you have received so much. As you go out to face life, you will undoubtedly encounter difficulties. But wherever you are, in whatever position you may be, Aligarh will still have claims on you. How can you repay the debt? You can do so best, my young friends, if you do your bit in helping to build up this country, in striving for the uplift of the poor and the underprivileged, and working for the greater unity of our people. We have attained Independence after many hardships and sacrifices. The same spirit of sacrifice is necessary to safeguard our freedom and strengthen the roots of democracy. We should sink all our differences and work unitedly with devotion for the progress of the motherland. That would be the greatest service alike to your country and to Aligarh.

## Shaping Young Minds

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here in Madras to participate in the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Bhaktavatsalam Educational Trust and the 89th Birthday of Shri M. Bhaktavatsalam, a veteran freedom fighter in whose name the above Educational Trust was established.

At the outset I convey my birthday greetings to Shri M. Bhaktavatsalam. He rendered great services to the country both before and after independence. His life was full of sacrifice and a dedicated soldier in our freedom struggle, since 1921, and courted arrest many times during the freedom struggle. He served the Indian National Congress in its organisational side and travelled throughout the length and breadth of Tamil Nadu.

His services to this State after independence as a Minister and as Chief Minister are known to all of you. He handled every portfolio in his charge with great distinction and ability and was recognised as an able administrator by his colleagues and the public at large.

It is a measure of his political wisdom and character as a true nationalist that even non-congress Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu reposed their trust and confidence in him. This is a fitting tribute to a man who had dedicated and placed his entire life at the altar of the nation. It gives me pleasure to associate myself in his birthday function and wish him many more happy returns of the day.

It is a matter of gratification that Shri O.V. Alagesan, a veteran freedom fighter himself, who established a reputation as an able Minister at the Centre, thought it fit to establish an Educational Trust in the name of Shri M. Bhaktavatsalam in 1958 to commemorate his 61st birthday. I am told that the Trust has made rapid progress since then both in the field of secondary education and in the field of technical education. I feel happy to note that students from all over India are admitted in these institutions. I am given to understand that a scholarship has been instituted here for students from Ethiopia. I am told that the Trust has undertaken an ambitious programme of

construction for its various educational institutions on the occasion of its silver jubilee. I wish its labour all success. I would also like to congratulate the students of the Trust's institutions for the guard of honour and the band which display their talents.

Education is a co-operative effort. Private efforts should supplement Governmental efforts in the field of education. Great names like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and a host of other educationists and pioneers in education crowd into one's mind while thinking of education in India. The contribution of various Christian Missions and the Ramakrishna Mission to the spread of education is incomparable. It shows private effort has always played a leading role in the field of education. After independence, the role of private effort has been increasing by leaps and bounds.

The constitutional provision of universal education to all, up to the age of 14 years is a tremendous challenge demanding massive resources for education. In view of many constraints on resources and competing demands, it is necessary to pool all available resources for the realisation of our objective. The Government of India are giving top priority to quality education to all.

I would like to thank the President Shri O.V. Alagesan and other Trustees of the Bhaktavatsalam Educational Trust for having given me this opportunity of meeting you and speaking to you on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee. While congratulating the Trust on its past achievements, which are quite appreciable, I wish it more and more success in its task of shaping young minds and creating good citizens out of them. I have great pleasure in releasing the Silver Jubilee Souvenir of the Trust and present the first copy to the Governor Shri S.L. Khurana, Governor of Tamil Nadu.

## Spreading Sports Awareness

I AM HAPPY to lay the foundation stone of the South Centre of Lakshmibai National College of Physical Education. In a way, it is a recognition of the sports talent here. It is hoped that it will serve as a veritable bridge between the North and the South and serve as a direct channel for exchange of personnel and free flow of knowledge, ideas, culture and people.

Lakshmibai National College of Physical Education was founded by the Union Government in 1957 at Gwalior. Since then it has been rendering yeoman service in training young men and women of India, as also some foreign students from Commonwealth countries. We, as a nation, are still struggling with many problems, social, economic and political and have not been able to concentrate much on physical fitness en masse. It is hoped that efforts will be made by this institution to make the ordinary man conscious of sports. Our performance in international sports must improve, and for that we should make conscious efforts. We must chalk out a long-term strategy.

The women of Kerala have been doing very well in sports and have been hitting the headlines through their performances in the sports competitions. P.T. Usha, M.D. Valsamma and Shiny Abraham have become household names. India is going to participate in the Asian Games being held at Seoul in September-October, this year. Many girls and boys from Kerala are included in the Indian contingent. Kerala has tremendous potential for water sports, which will also attract a large number of tourists.

Kerala is blessed with people full of zest for life and initiative. They are hard working people and they can certainly bring honour to India in the matter of sports. It is nice of the Kerala Government to have given land and financial assistance in the setting up of this institution. Coaches and trainers have a great responsibility in instructing young boys and girls in sports.



The youth should keep in mind that :

Aimlessness is namelessness

Aim high to tame life

Indians first and last on and off the field

To the physical education and sports teachers the aim should be:

Each one, coach one to become an Olympic winner

Spurt in sport will spur the society.

With my friend, Shri V.C. Shukla, and many stalwarts of Indian sports present here, I wish to make a few observations. I want Shuklaji to create a competitive spirit among all Chief Ministers so that every State provides the best facilities for sports and games. I am sure my friend Karunakaran Saab will gladly and readily accept such a challenge.

Already, the Union Government is doing a lot for sports. The allocation for sports in the Seventh Five Year Plan has been given a substantial rise. Now, it should be the endeavour of public sector and private sector undertakings to contribute better for sports and recruit potential sports persons. I suggest to the Government and Shuklaji to institute awards for the Chairmen or Managing Directors who produce outstanding results in the sports field.

I wish the new venture in Trivandrum good luck and all success.

## Nurseries of Future

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to come to this beautiful town of yours for inauguration of the Jubilee Celebrations of St. Berchmans' College. It is one of the prestigious institutions of higher education in the State of Kerala. Today as this college celebrates the Diamond Jubilee of the starting of National Science Courses and the Silver Jubilee of the inception of post-graduate courses, we rejoice in its progress and development. This institution has rendered great service to thousands of students, who have passed through its portals. They have received not only good knowledge, but also high sets of values. This college has been making immense contributions to the cause of education in this part of the country.

I have been told that recently it has started offering facilities for research in science and humanities. It has maintained steady growth and has made notable achievements. Many of its students have won distinctions in various University examinations. Quite a few of them have distinguished themselves in many walks of life and gained eminence. St. Berchmans' College is one of the best known educational institutions in these parts.

Discipline is the soul of a successful seat of learning. It generates such qualities of character that make for a progressive society. Discipline is necessary for all groups and societies which wish to raise their standards materially and spiritually.

I am glad to know that this College has been laying great stress on discipline and good behaviour. It has been marked by a spirit of creative co-operation between the teachers and students and between the management and the teachers. Such an atmosphere can foster higher values of life. I understand, this College has been blessed with such an atmosphere, which has made it a coveted centre of education. I congratulate the management, the teaching staff and the students on this commendable quality.

The introductory words of the Report of Education Commission of 1964-66 that the "destiny of India is now being shaped in her class rooms" are as relevant today as they were two decades ago. The future of India, its dreams and aspirations depend on the vision, ideals and dreams of the youth of our country. It is in the colleges and universities that the youths are trained and guided for the responsibilities they have to shoulder later in life. As these institutions are the nurseries of India's future and the cradles of India's vision, their importance can in no way be minimized in the over-all development of the country. Every effort has to be made to keep the universities and colleges free of external influences of caste, communalism and politics.

Students should realize that the time they spend in the universities and colleges, is the best part of their lives. It is the time that is given to them by God to make themselves ready for future responsibilities. To waste such a precious time of life by indulging in acts of violence, strikes or boycotts is a great loss to themselves and the society. A lot of investment has to be made and resources have to be spent on education. The output should justify the input, and the output consists in the men and women, who come out of the universities. They should be the adequate human material necessary for the building up of future India.

We should remember that two thirds of our population are still illiterate. Huge efforts will have to be made to eradicate the curse of illiteracy. This needs tremendous resources, which, are unfortunately highly limited.

I have great faith in the youths of our country. I feel our future is safe in their hands. They are second to none in the world in the matter of intelligence and capacity to grasp. All that is needed is a healthy environment free of exploitation of young minds by selfish elements. No one has a right to mislead and misguide the students and other younger people to indulge in acts of hatred and other evils. If they are treated with sympathy and understanding, they can contribute all their youthful energy in national reconstruction.

Research is one of the mainstays of education in a world of fast developing science, technology and the humanities. It is through research that we have achieved so much progress in such a short time. The modern scientific laboratories are the temples of progress, where future battles against poverty and disease are to be fought.

St. Berchmans' College has chosen the right path in going for research and deciding to establish a special research centre. Through

its research in Natural and Physical sciences, it can offer significant contributions to the preservation of the eco-systems of the region. It can guide the farmers in different aspects of farming. The research done in the colleges and Universities of Kerala should be useful for and relevant to the special features of this beautiful land.

I have great pleasure in inaugurating the Jubilee celebration of this college. I thank Archbishop Joseph Powathil and Principal Dr. Joseph Maroor, members of the staff and students, and the public of Changanacherry for inviting me on this occasion.

I am happy at the success of this college has achieved so far. Since 1922 it has grown into what I may call a lead college.

I have every good wish for this college and the people of Kerala. They are progressive, active and hard working people. They are warm hearted, hospitable and friendly. They have love for higher learning and wisdom. Their spirit of enterprise has won acclaim much beyond the borders of this State. I wish the rest of the country is guided by the same pragmatic outlook and zeal. My best wishes to you all !

## The Torch Bearers

**I**T IS INDEED, a matter of pleasure for me to be here this afternoon to honour some of our distinguished teachers from different parts of the country for their dedicated service to the nation. I congratulate all the award winners and I take this opportunity to express my deep sense of gratitude, not only to the award winners but also to the entire teaching community, who play a crucial role in the successful implementation of all our educational programmes.

The Teachers' Day, this year, is being celebrated at an important stage in India's educational development. As you are aware, in May 1986, the Government of India has adopted a New National Policy on Education. The Policy visualises the teacher as the main instrument to bring about the desired changes in the present system of education. It also stresses the need to create conditions which would help, motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines and envisages freedom for the teachers to innovate, to devise appropriate methods of communication and activities relevant to the needs and the concerns of the community.

As you all would have noticed, the policy provides directions and possible future initiatives necessary for evolving a National system of education. The changes that are contemplated in the education system call for a change in the role and functions of teachers. Of all the factors that influence the quality of education and its contribution to national development, the quality, competence and character of teachers, are considered to be the most significant. Since the quality of education depends largely upon the quality of teachers and the place they occupy in the school as well as in the community, it is rightly said that no education system can rise above the level of its teachers.

Very often I have seen that the quality of education received by a child is not good even though the school has a spacious building, modern equipment, quality instructional materials and other facilities for teaching various subjects. I have also seen schools where the teachers have been successful in creating, stimulating and enriching

the learning environment in the school and in providing quality education to the children with relatively lesser facilities. If one delves deeper into the problems affecting the quality of education, it would be apparent that it is the quality of teachers which matters most. If the teacher is sincere, honest and frank and is ready to seek new knowledge to equip himself to face the challenges posed by the ever changing curriculum, he can become an outstanding teacher who inspires not only the student population but also the entire community around the school. I am sure the New National Policy on Education will facilitate the creation of conditions which would help, motivate and inspire teachers to perform their expected roles efficiently and effectively.

There is today a greater concern for education than ever before and there is an increasing realisation that the future of the country depends upon its human resources. Education is conceived as a basic input and a basic instrument as well, of human resource development. In this context, the teacher is required to assume greater responsibility for the total development of personality of children under his care and to prepare them as citizens with democratic, secular and egalitarian values. Special emphasis should be laid on the inculcation of values of cleanliness, human dignity, truthfulness, hard-work, equality and cooperation. Value education programmes should also highlight common human values underlying all creeds and faiths in order to promote tolerance and understanding among children.

In the context of the new and emerging social order, the teacher is expected to have a vision of the new society and its demands. India, in the past, not only enriched the human civilisation while contributing to the world's quest for knowledge and wisdom but also provided a value orientation for the constructive functioning of the society at large. With the development of science and technology, while the world has been moving towards consumerism and development of more sophisticated weapons of destruction, India has been striving to spread the message of peace, non-violence, and tolerance and has been acting as a champion of human rights and values. I am confident that instructional packages developed on the basis of the National curriculum framework envisaged under the New National Policy on Education, will emphasise this spiritual dimension, together with scientific temper necessary for economic growth in a modern society. The Government of India are aware of the difficult conditions in which teachers perform their professional obligations. The need for

improving the status and service conditions of the teachers and upgrading their professional competence have been widely recognized. As part of the efforts for enhancing the professional competence of teachers, arousing their motivation, upgrading their knowledge and content and orienting them to the recent developments related to instructional methods, I am told that a series of inservice training programmes for teachers will be launched shortly. I am informed that during the period April to July 1986, the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India has sponsored a massive inservice teacher education programme involving 5,00,000 teachers at both primary and secondary levels. Such programmes will go a long way in creating the right kind of atmosphere for improving the quality of education by equipping teachers with the new ideas in the field of education.

I once again congratulate the teachers who have won the National Awards for their meritorious work. I also take this opportunity to thank Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao and Smt. Krishna Sahi for giving me this opportunity to be with you this afternoon.

## Canvas of Universe

I AM VERY glad to be associated with this special Convocation of the University of Jammu and to deliver the Convocation address.

I congratulate all those young men and women, who have received Degrees of M.Phil., and Ph.D., which is indicative of the fact that they have earned these academic honours by dint of their hard, sincere and consistent efforts. A high degree in education, no doubt, helps an individual to seek a job and to launch himself on a particular course in life. But this is not the sole aim of education. Education cultivates the human mind, irrigates the tracts of intelligence and whets the appetite for greater knowledge. There cannot indeed be any end to learning. All that an individual can grasp in his life-time is but a speck of wisdom on the vast canvas of the universe. Also there can be a hiatus between formal education and practical knowledge. One can attain real wisdom by application of knowledge gained in class rooms, libraries and laboratories.

We have inherited a bewitchingly beautiful country. It is a blend of reality and legend. Its historical monuments, temples of learning, places of worship, mountains and caves, rivers and valleys coupled with gigantic developmental projects and modern industries make it a most fascinating land on this earth. People speaking different languages and dialects, wearing traditional costumes, professing various faiths and plying diverse vocations present a rich mosaic of a united entity that is India.

When I see young and beaming faces here, I am filled with the vision of a vibrant Indian nation. I can discern the lustre in your eyes and feel the strength and vitality coursing through your veins. I can sense your keenness to take off on the road to progress, to serve humanity and to bring glory to the motherland.

The future of this country will be assured only when each young man and woman will be imbued with a sense of national pride. This pride and collective self-confidence are witnessed with all their glory, when the country is faced with foreign aggression. But a real test of



solidarity and cohesion is seen in times of peace, when there are internal assaults by a few malcontents or self-seeking individuals working with or without foreign instigation with the aim of creating fissures and disrupting the tranquil tenor of society. The nation has to muster all its might to face such fissiparous forces and to frustrate their sinister designs.

Diversity of views is the spice of democracy. Disagreement and expression of opinions freely, frankly and fearlessly are guaranteed in our Constitution. Public opinion is supreme in a democratic system and there should be no reason to challenge, much less negate, this supremacy. In our democratic set-up no one should arrogate to himself the right to trample over the sentiments of people under any pretext. Ours is a vast country embracing in its arms a sea of humanity. It is natural for the people to have regional aspirations. Reorganisation of States on linguistic basis was aimed at creating harmony and homogeneity. Freedom of speech and expression, freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practise and propagate one's religion are guaranteed to each citizen. These and other fundamental rights are inviolable, but at the same time there are fundamental duties, which have to be fulfilled. Every citizen has to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of the country. Each one of us has to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all people of India transcending religious, linguistic, regional or sectional diversities.

In this framework the rise of differences should not be allowed to develop into disputes. And disputes should never be solved by bullet as ballot is a more powerful and civilized weapon in a democracy. A genuine grievance of a section of the people should be tackled expeditiously and not left to become a festering sore. The method of conversion of the views of the Government by the people or of the people by the Government is much more preferable than the method of confrontation. In a democracy, masses are the real masters. The government and other organs of the State are the servants of the people. The masters cannot afford laxity. They have to exercise constant vigilance over the functioning of the governmental bodies. The government have to discharge their obligations with alacrity, aplomb and devotion. The Administration must try to fill communication gap between different groups of people. And if a distrust arises they would do well to make efforts to remove that distrust. At the same time there cannot be any compromise with the

forces of disunity and disruption. No one can be allowed to sow discord between various cultural or religious groups. The governments have to guarantee the security of life and property of every person. For this, they have to inspire the people with confidence about their capacity and competence to govern. Firmness tempered with fairplay, and power combined with compassion would be far more effective in winning the support and sympathy of the people than by show or application of force.

In this sphere the responsibility rests in no less measure on political parties, social groups and leaders of public opinion, who owe it to the country not to do anything which might harm the interest of the people, weaken the development of the society and injure the basic unity of the nation.

In our democratic State, the Administration should have empathy for the people and sensitivity to their sentiments and aspirations. It should be responsive to their needs and demands, should deal with their problems with a humane approach, politely and expeditiously. Most of our people are poor, famished and unlettered. No doubt the country has made tremendous advances in agriculture, industry, science and technology. We are marching ahead on many fronts. Yet millions of our people are ill-fed, ill-clothed and shelterless. They are being crushed under the massive wheels of poverty. Millions, in thousands of villages, are still waiting for a single source of potable water. The biggest crunch is that of illiteracy. We have yet to travel a long distance to the fulfilment of the directive principle of free and compulsory education for all our children. We have yet to implement other welfare measure including assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement. How can all this be achieved with the availability of limited resources? Shall we not take the problem of galloping rise in population most seriously? If all sections of our people do not address themselves to this gigantic problem, can we save ourselves from going down the precipice? We are living in two worlds; one of opulence and plenty, the other of destitution and penury. In a socialist society, these yawning gaps have to be narrowed down.

Women in our country are still a neglected lot. Our traditional society still assigns lower importance to the upbringing of girls than boys. Educationists would do well to take it upon themselves to secure equal status for women in the society. Given proper facilities and encouragement, women can do as good, if not better, as menfolk. Education should be so designed as to wipe off prejudices against

women and to accord them equal opportunities of socio-economic development to enable them to contribute their maximum to nation building.

In today's complex world no nation can exist or progress in isolation. Apart from economic inter-dependence, there are other fields in which nations are equally affected by the policies and actions of others. An unfortunate nuclear accident in one country can endanger the health and life of millions in neighbouring states. One shudders at the consequences of a nuclear strife. One such misadventure can set at naught the strivings of the humanity over centuries for material advancement. India has pledged itself to harness nuclear energy to peaceful uses. There are rumblings, however, of a nuclear weapon being made in our neighbourhood. That would surely create a piquant situation for this country. One can only hope that good sense will prevail and we shall not be obliged to change our course, as that would not be in the interest of any one. India has been consistently working for world peace. We are reluctant to divert our precious resources to enter into an arms race with our neighbours. We should not be deflected from our peaceful path, but defence of the country has to take precedence over everything else. I am confident that in case of any aggression on our borders, the youths of our country would stand as one man to fight the aggressors and to save the honour, dignity and sanctity of the motherland.

We have to make India strong materially and spiritually. A united and strong India can be a powerful factor in the world. It can then contribute better for peace, equity and justice. It can then play more effective role in making this planet a better place to live in.

I would appeal to all sections of the people especially the educated lot to try to build an atmosphere of peace, strength, harmony and prosperity. Though the educated ones may be in a minority, yet they have greater responsibilities and obligations, as they are the opinion makers and have to give lead to the society.

I am glad to be on the soil of Jammu & Kashmir. Nature has been most generous and bountiful to this State. It has bestowed unparalleled beauty on its lakes, glades, meadows and mountains. It is a veritable paradise on earth. The Dal and Wular lakes have no peer in the world. It is necessary that the government and the people of the State should pay attention to keep the lakes, rivers and cities of the State clean and glittering and restore their pristine glory. Let Jammu & Kashmir continue to be a heaven for tourists, who come here for rejuvenation in its ambrosial air.

Today, I am reminded of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah, who was one of the architects of secularism. His continuous crusade against foreign domination created for him an immortal place in the history of our freedom struggle. I have long reminiscences of his courage and wisdom and his unceasing efforts to usher in freedom and democracy. I pay homage to that stalwart of national struggle, an intrepid fighter for justice and human dignity.

With these words I once again felicitate those who have been awarded degrees in this Convocation and wish them success in the future. I also express my deep appreciation for the University of Jammu and the continued excellence in its academic endeavours.

## Light of Knowledge

I AM THANKFUL to the Indian Adult Education Association for providing me this opportunity to associate myself with the presentation of the Nehru Literacy Award (1986) to Dr. (Mrs.) Madhuri R. Shah. I congratulate her on this well-merited recognition which she has earned and wish her many more years of service in the noble cause of education. I am sure Dr. Shah's example would be a source of inspiration to other workers in this field and many more would come forward to help in the noble task of eradicating illiteracy from our country. She was largely responsible for bringing a number of universities within the ambit of adult education and providing a new dimension to the University's responsibility towards the community.

The Nehru Literacy Award named after our great leader is a coveted honour and a source of inspiration to all those who are devoted to the promotion of adult education. Panditji stood for the creation of an enlightened and egalitarian society, based on science and technology, secularism and social justice and fought throughout his life, before independence and after, for the welfare of the neglected and weaker sections of our people.

An enlightened and well-informed electorate is essential for a democracy to thrive. A democratic social order can function only if the citizens are vigilant and participate actively in the affairs of the nation. For this we must educate them and harness the unlimited energies of the teeming millions of our people for national regeneration and reconstruction and motivate them to build a new society.

Motivating common men and women to change their old habits, prejudices, behaviour and outlook cannot be undertaken by an apparatus which is itself wedded to old practices. Therefore, new strategies and technologies will have to be developed in order to instil a desire to change and initiate action for a change in attitude, behaviour and practices. I am sure voluntary organisations like the Indian Adult

Education Association would take up the responsibility of bringing about attitudinal and behavioural changes through education and by linking education to developmental activities, so that the fruits of development are reaped by those for whom these are meant.

In my opinion, transition from a traditional to a modern society can take place only if the masses become literate and appreciate the true significance of social change. Adult literacy is an essential condition for the smooth and successful working of parliamentary democracy, and for achieving social progress. It has to be regarded as also one of the means by which other aspects of social life of the community can be furthered. For the success of family planning, child care, drive against social evils, development of cottage and rural industries, rural women's development, and vocational training, it is necessary to educate adult men and women. Literacy in my view, opens the door to a richer and more rewarding life, as an individual, as a producer and as a citizen.

I know it is difficult to teach an adult than to teach a child but once the light of knowledge awakens the unlettered adult he or she becomes a firm supporter of literacy and start sending children to school. I also know that illiteracy has kept millions of our people notably women, farmers, labourers and tribals out of the mainstream of our national life and if we want to bring them on the mainstream we must launch a powerful adult literacy movement. All India Radio, TV and the print media must join hands to create a climate for the same and motivate unlettered men and women to become literate.

In my opinion, the battle of literacy can be a harbinger of a new social order and therefore, I consider the endeavours of the Indian Adult Education Association, to promote literacy for over four decades praiseworthy. Nevertheless, I must confess, my deep regret that even after 40 years of independence, it has not been possible for us to make any substantial dent on the problem of illiteracy. It is sad that in 40 years of independence we have not been able to make even 40 per cent of our people literate. Therefore, I call upon the educated citizenry of this great country to take a pledge to eradicate illiteracy in the shortest possible time.

The government have accorded a high priority to the eradication of illiteracy in the New Education Policy and I am sure sufficient funds will be allocated for it. I hope my educated countrymen and women, would join hands to give the gift of knowledge and learning to their less fortunate brothers and sisters. In ancient India, *Vidyadaan* was considered the highest gift.

Liquidation of illiteracy is our moral duty because it is an essential condition of human progress. Organisations which have dedicated their efforts and resources to this vital mission deserve the highest praise, encouragement and support.

The Indian Adult Education Association which has provided leadership to the adult education movement since 1939 under the leadership of one of our eminent architect of free India and one of my distinguished predecessors Dr. Zakir Hussain, deserve congratulations not only for keeping the question of eradication of illiteracy in the forefront but also naming the Award after Nehru who felt for the masses and earnestly desired to lift them out of a state of poverty and ignorance.

I once again congratulate Dr. Madhuri Shah for the honour conferred on her and hope and trust that more and more women of her eminence and qualification would join in the national task of eradicating illiteracy which the Father of the Nation had characterised as our 'sin and shame'.

## Temples of Learning

I AM FEELING great pleasure in inaugurating the New Building Complex of Govindaraja Swamy Arts College. Tirupati is a great centre of pilgrimage and it is also a glorious town. It is dotted with numerous ancient temples, which have a great importance in India's history. People from all parts of the country come to pay their homage at the feet of Lord Venkateswara at Tirupati. People of India and other countries have great faith in the temple of Tirupati and show a great devotion to Lord Venkateswara. This institution is honoured by associating itself with the name of Govindaraja Swamy.

Education is imparted in the buildings constructed by the educational institutions. These temples of learnings improved the intellectual standards of our youths. It is through education only that the students of the country attain various capabilities to become able citizens. The building complexes are as important as the process of education. If the places are clean and their environment is complimentary, the students would be able to devote greater attention to scholarship and by inculcating the qualities of good citizenship, they would be able to render great service to the nation.

A great responsibility rests on the shoulders of teachers. They should get a respectable place in the society. By building the character of the impressionable youths and inspiring them to patriotism, they assume the role of nation building. It is not enough that they teach the students in their classrooms, their actual rôle comes in showing the correct direction to the students.

Schools and colleges are sacred places and the teachers therein are the deities. It is very important to arouse this sort of conviction in the minds of the students. Once they are within the precincts of a school or a college there should not be any discrimination among students on the basis of their richness or poverty. All should receive equal treatment to enable them to imbibe the spirit of fraternity and equality.

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Speech at the inauguration of the new building complex of Govindaraja Swamy Arts College, Tirupati April 6, 1987



I have been taking deep interest in the education for a long time. As Chief Minister of Punjab and Home Minister of India, I contributed my maximum to improve educational system. In my present position, it has been my consistent endeavour to widen the scope of education and to attempt to provide all sorts of facilities to these institutions. I wish the students in every field to build a brighter future and to receive the best possible education in the country.

I do expect from the teacher community that they would continue to inspire the students to lofty ideals of service to the society and taking the country to greater heights. I would also appeal to the various Governments in the country to bring the wages of the teachers at par with the cost of satisfactory living standards.

If they are the contented lot, they would be able to devote greater attention to improving the standards of education. Sometimes they adopt the methods of agitation and strikes to get their demands fulfilled. This has adverse effect on the psychology of the students. I do hope that this would be seriously considered. I have every wish for the progress and development of this particular college so that the youths should be able to benefit by it.

Our future depends on the children and youths of our country. From the beginning of the world, it has been the tradition that one generation takes over from the previous generation. It is important therefore that we should help our children and youths to develop their composite personality and walk shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the world. They should be able to face the severest competition from the rest of the world.

Alongwith the scholarly pursuits one should not loose sight of sports and spirit of adventure. The priority should be given by the youths to their health—physical and mental. I have always had deep faith in the students. I can say with certainty that our youths are not inferior to the youths of any part of the world in understanding and intellect. The only need is to give them proper direction.

About 80% of our population lives in rural areas. The facility of education and modern support is lacking in these areas owing to poverty. The employment opportunities are also not very adequate. 64% of our population is illiterate. No doubt during the last 40 years since our independence, the ratio of literates has increased from 18 to 36%. For this many plans have to be formulated and a great deal of expenditure has to be incurred. I wonder when the day will dawn when all our people will be able to read and write. I am not talking of english

education or higher training in various fields. In this context I am only concerned with literacy in ones own language to be able to read and write letters and to make use of newspapers.

I cannot say why we are still according a place of honour to English education. Fifteen Indian languages have been recognised in our Constitution. Besides them, there are other languages and dialects which are being used by millions of our people. If one can learn to read and write in one of the Indian languages, he would be considered literate.

In the modern age colleges and universities have become an arena of politics. I am of the view that till such times the students complete their education they should not indulge in politics. I am not at all averse to political activities, but I do not want politics to make inroads into educational institutions, so that the students could devote all their energy and time to their scholarly pursuits. If the younger generation would give a helping hand in the development of our country, the nation will really progress.

Our youths are highly intelligent and alert. They should adopt the attitude of truth, service and faith to take the country to the portals of success.

I do not foresee any immediate danger on our borders, but we should never be complacent against any possible threat from outside. Lethal weapons have been piled up, which have the capabilities of destroying the globe many times over.

We should also be alert to the intentions of some selfish neighbouring countries. No doubt the basic responsibility of the defence of the country is that of our Armed Forces, but this responsibility has to be shared by our younger generation as a whole. It is the duty of every true son of Mother India to remain ready to make any possible sacrifice for defending his freedom. I am confident that the youths of our country will never lag behind in discharging this obligation.

I congratulate the Govindraja Swamy Arts College for its new building complex. I felicitate this institution and the youths of Andhra Pradesh and the whole of India and wish them success, prosperity and progress.

## Architects of Nation

**I**T GIVES ME immense pleasure to be here today and to inaugurate the centenary celebrations of the Government Comprehensive College of Education, Rajahmundry and its model high school. The pleasant memories of my visit here in July 1983 are still fresh in my mind. I readily accepted to come here because of my special liking for Rajahmundry and for educational institution meant to train teachers. This institution has completed one hundred and three years of its existence in Rajahmundry, the oldest cultural centre of Andhra Pradesh, situated on the banks of sacred river Godavari. I also notice with pleasure that many who studied in this institution occupied good positions in all walks of life in general and in teaching profession in particular. It is also appreciable to note that this institution is doing yeoman service for the cause of education.

I feel happy to note that this institution is providing teacher education at the pre-service level for B.Ed., M.Ed., and Telugu Pandits Training Certificate Courses. It is worthy to note that this institution is catering to the academic needs of the in-service teachers, science teachers and correspondence course students.

Swami Vivekananda pleaded for a life-building, man-making, character-making education. He felt that education must increase one's strength of mind, expand one's intellect and enable one to stand on one's own feet. Swami conceived of a mystical humanist education, where there was an assimilation of the spirit of oneness of God with modern Science. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore attempted this fusion at Viswabharathi. Mahatmaji laid emphasis on truth, knowledge and education through service. He suggested a system of education which is naturalistic in its setting, idealistic in its aims and pragmatic in its methods. He felt education should draw the best in the child and man in body, mind and spirit. He was of the view that education should become an insurance against unemployment.

It has been universally agreed that education should aim at the all round development of the child and make the individual physically

strong, intellectually alert, emotionally balanced, socially efficient and culturally sound. In the present day society with explosion in knowledge and rapid social change there is need to inculcate right type of attitudes, values and interests amongst the pupils. Education is not pouring to information from one bucket to the other. It is partly information and partly formation. The formation part of the child should get more emphasis. Schools besides being fountain heads of knowledge, should also perform a duty in shaping the personality of the child. Schools should impart knowledge, develop skills and inculcate right type of attitudes, values and interests. They should play a very important role in developing a collective consciousness among pupils and inculcate in them qualities like tolerance, mutual respect, give and take and co-operation. I have great respect for teachers and I am sure that teachers-training institutions will do all their best in realising the goals before the nation.

I feel that teacher is the most and crucial person for the success of any educational programme. As Mahatmaji pointed out, "Everyone of us has good inherent in the soul; it needs to be drawn out by the teachers, and only those teachers can perform this sacred function whose own character is unsullied, who are always ready to learn and to grow from perfection to perfection." We must not only strive to recruit the best available as our teachers but we must also provide opportunities for them to grow. The teacher has to recognise that education is a process that brings about desirable changes in the child. The teacher cannot assume that he has done a good job when he has simply gone over a lesson in the class.

The quality, competence and character of teachers are the main factors that influence the system of education. A sound programme of professional education of teachers is essential for the qualitative improvement of system of education. Investment in teacher education can yield very rich dividends, in the field of human resource development. The essence of a programme of teacher education is "quality" and in its absence teacher-education becomes, not only a financial waste but a source of overall deterioration in educational standards.

Like any other profession, teaching is also a specialised vocation, needing special knowledge, skill and coaching. The training colleges which are the professional colleges for teachers must adopt new and latest methods of teaching in providing effective training to the teachers.

The Sanskrit poet Kalidasa says: “If the teacher’s scholarship is just for earning bread, then he is no better than a shop-keeper selling knowledge.”

East or West, everywhere the teacher has been respected and worshipped. In ancient India, he was ranked next to God, in the West, he has been called the “architect of the nation”—“the maker of men” and “the maker of history”. The child, from our stand point receives the second birth at the hands of the teacher. It is the teacher who plays a prominent role in moulding and shaping the habits, tastes and the character and personality of the pupils. The teacher has to discharge his obligation towards the pupils, towards the community and towards the profession effectively. A child is like a bud which would blossom into a fragrant flower if the teacher showered his love and affection on him. Time has come to bring out a revolutionary change in the system of teacher-training programme. It is the duty of every democratic government to bring such revolutionary changes in this regard to train a right teacher at a right moment through right means.

I am glad to note that this is the oldest teacher education college in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Established in the year 1883 as an Elementary Normal School, it has attained the status of a Training College in 1904. As this is a Comprehensive College of Education, I feel that there is need to start new courses like pre-primary teacher-training programme, primary school teacher training programme and research facilities in the faculty of education. There is need to make this pioneering institution in the field of teacher-education as an autonomous college, to meet the growing needs of the area. I am sure that necessary infrastructural facilities will be provided by the authorities to make it a comprehensive college with all research facilities.

Unemployment is a major problem in our country. The effect of unemployment is more pronounced on the educated class, as they spend a lot of time and resources on receiving education. Their ambitions and aspiration are also more than those who are unable to get educational opportunities. It is necessary, therefore, that the youths should receive that type of education which provides them with higher employment opportunities in the governmental and the non-governmental spheres. Alternatively, they should be able to start their own small scale enterprises.

In the present generation, girls have also started competing with the boys in seeking educational attainments. I have witnessed at the

convocations of various Universities where girls vie with boys to receive high degrees. In fact, in some cases the girls outnumber the boys. Such girls, intellectually brilliant and temperamentally self-confident do not want to remain inactive and start competing with boys in finding positions in various vocations. I hope that in our developing society, enough opportunities for self-attainment would be available to everyone and no one will have to be the victim of frustration.

# **Art and Culture**

## Tolerance and Brotherhood

I HAVE GREAT pleasure in associating myself with the inauguration of this Seminar organised by the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture and Asiatic Society, Calcutta. Ours is a vast country inhabited by followers of different religions speaking different languages and practising different customs but we can feel one single soul thriving throughout this land from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Punjab to Assam. The reason is that for thousands of years we have been united to each other by history, culture, hopes and aspirations. "Unity in Diversity" is the special feature of our ancient culture, moral traditions and social heritage.

On religious level we follow the ideal of "Live and let live". Religion has two aspects—the first is its rituals and customs and the other the eternal truth. Man has ever been trying to realise God. For this, different religions prescribe different methods. But the ultimate of them all is the same. The real thing is the aim, not the methods of achieving it. These can be different. The true great personalities do not give any importance to rituals and customs, they stress the need to find the truth with a pure heart.

One such great man has been Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa, who preached the unity of one God-head. He inspired Swami Vivekananda to spread the message of universal brotherhood through selfless service. To translate this teaching into actions Swami Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission. The dedication and zeal with which Ramakrishna Mission is serving all mankind selflessly is a major contribution towards the national unity.

Swami Vivekananda said that the basis of all religions is spiritual unity and the purpose is peace of mind. He felt that India can only make progress through love and peace; and that unless the masses are assured of reasonable food, education and facilities, no polity will be of any avail. Spiritual unity leads to the unity of soul and intellect which in turn paves the way for national unity.